A 4326. aa. 5.

A DIALOGUE Between A *Paſtor* and *Pariſhioner*, Touching the *LORD's SUPPER.*

WHEREIN

The moſt material Doubts and Scruples, about Receiving that Holy *Sacrament*, are removed, and the Way thereto diſcovered to be both Plain and Pleaſant.

Very uſeful for private Chriſtians in theſe Scrupulous Times.

By *MICHAEL ALTHAM*, Vicar of *Latton* in *Eſſex*.

The Second Edition.

To which is added,

Some ſhort Prayers, fitted for that Occaſion; and a Morning and Evening Prayer, for the Uſe of Private Families.

LONDON,

Printed by *J. L.* for *Luke Meredith*, at the *King's Head*, at the Weſt-End of St. *Paul's Church-Yard*, 1685.

THE
PREFACE.

IT *was a Saying of the Jewiſh wiſe men*, He that contemns the Feaſts, or the ſacred Conventions, (*of which the Paſsover was the chief*) and he who maketh void the Covenant of *Abraham* our Father (*which was Circumciſion*) there is no portion for him in the World to come. *A Saying worthy their conſideration who deſpiſe things ſacred, whether the holy Aſſemblies, or the holy Sacraments. Correſpondent whereunto is that expreſſion of one of our own men, who tells us*, That to neglect the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, hath more of evil and danger in it, than people do uſually think of; For, 1. It is next to the diſowning of Chriſtianity, or not profeſſing our ſelves to be Chriſt's Diſciples. 2. It is a cutting our ſelves off from the Body of Chriſt, an open Declaration that we have no Communion with him;

and therefore as plain a confeſſion that we deſerve to be rejected and caſt off by him, for whom we have ſo little regard. *Both which Sayings do evidently declare the ſence of their Authors as to the neceſſity of Sacraments, and ſacred Conventions.*

Theſe Sayings have ſo much of weight in them, not only from the Authority of their Authors, but alſo from thoſe reaſons upon which they are founded, that no man will have cauſe to wonder, when I tell him, that at firſt ſight, I was very much affected with them.

But when I had ſeriouſly conſidered the Inſtitution of the ſacred Euchariſt, or Supper of the Lord, and deliberately weighed the word of command which attends it, I could not but ſtand aſtoniſhed to obſerve the ſlight and neglect which people uſually put upon it.

This deeply engaged my thoughts for ſome time, and made me mighty deſirous to diſcover the reaſon, and if poſſible, to find out ſome ſutable remedy. To this end I ſet my ſelf ſeriouſly to obſerve the deſign of the Author and Inſtituter of this holy Feaſt, and upon the moſt diligent ſearch, and exacteſt ſcrutiny that I could

make,

make, could find nothing intended by him, but only the good of Mankind. I examin'd the thing it ſelf, and could diſcover nothing therein, but what had a real tendency to man's happineſs.

I heard God, by his Ambaſſadors, the Miniſters of the Goſpel, with all the kindneſs and earneſtneſs imaginable, inviting and perſwading men thereunto; and I ſaw men, with all the averſion, ſcorn and contempt poſſible, refuſe the kindneſs that was offered, and reject the invitation that was given them. I ſaw a Table ſpread, a rich Feaſt provided, and nothing wanting but the Gueſts to ſit down; and I beheld thoſe who were invited, and who ought thankfully to have received ſo great a favour, ſtand off, and keep at as great a diſtance, as if there had been really Mors in Ollâ, *Death in the Pot, or ſome deadly poyſon in the Bread and Wine which was offered to them.*

This ſurpriſed me ſo, that I ſtood amazed, and could not be at quiet till I had found out the cauſe of this rude behaviour. This put me upon being more curious and inquiſitive than before; And at laſt I eſpied two evil Dæmons *lurking in their ſecret Corners,* viz. *Ignorance and*

Prejudice, and plainly found that they had been the occaſion of all this.

To obviate therefore both theſe, by better inſtructing the ignorance of ſome, and removing the prejudices of others, is the great buſineſs of this ſmall Treatiſe, and was the only deſign of the Author. And if in any meaſure it may prove ſerviceable to theſe great and good ends, Let God have the glory of it.

Did men truly know, what it is to be admitted gueſts at God's Table, to have the honour not only to feaſt with him, but feaſt upon him; that it is none of thoſe common mercies, which are equally ſhar'd among the ſons of men; but a priviledge peculiar only to the followers of the holy Jeſus. That man as man hath no right thereunto, but a he is a Chriſtian man, one who hath embraced the Faith, and ſubmitted himſelf to the Goſpel of Chriſt Jeſus. Did all who pretend to Chriſtianity truly know this, how much would they value themſelves upon that account? How fitly may that of the Poet be applyed to ſuch.

—— O fortunatos, bona ſi ſua norint!

How happy are Chriſtians, if they knew their own happineſs!

But

But alas! how little is this understood? or if at all, how little is it valued by any of them? Certainly were men so sensible of their own happiness, as one would think they ought to be; we should not need so earnestly, and yet so unsuccessfully, to invite them to this holy Feast, as usually we do. They would with less reluctancy, and more readiness embrace, and with greater Reverence and Devotion use such opportunities. With what longing desires, and greedy appetites would they receive them? With what care and caution would they fit and prepare themselves to be present at so great and glorious an entertainment? Then would they employ all their thoughts, and all their time, so to deck and adorn their Souls, that nothing might appear unhandsome or unseemly, either in them or about them, when they come into the presence of the holy Jesus; Then would they cloth themselves with Faith and Charity as with a garment, and having with tears of true and unfeigned repentance bewail'd the miscarriages of their by-past lives, they would with resolutions of better obedience for the future, and grateful acknowledgments for the present opportunity, address themselves thereunto.

But

But it is too ſad a truth, The name of Chriſtian makes a great noiſe in the World, whilſt the power and life of Chriſtianity is almoſt (I wiſh I might not ſay altogether) loſt among us. There are indeed a great many Chriſtians but little Chriſtianity left in the World. It is ſtoried of Diogenes, *that he went with a Candle and Lanthorn at Noon day to ſearch for an honeſt man in* Athens; *and ſo may we too (and I am afraid loſe our labour as he did) to ſearch for a true Chriſtian among the crowd of thoſe who call themſelves by that name. Shall we call him a Chriſtian, whoſe unchriſtian practices contradict his pretenſions thereunto? who denies obedience to the Laws of Chriſt's Kingdom, and declines all opportunities of approving himſelf ſuch an one?*

The Celebration of the Lord's Supper, is a buſineſs of our bleſſed Saviour's own Inſtitution, whoſe command we have, not only to do it, but to do it often; and yet all this notwithſtanding, how few are there who ſeem to have any value and eſteem for it? Some ſcruple and ſay, they are there not ready; but never take care to prepare themſelves for it. Others pretend they are hindered by Worldly buſineſs, and yet are

readier

readier to engage in more, than to rid their hands of any they have already. But the far greater part do utterly ſlight and neglect it, as a thing not worthy their time and thoughts. I appeal to all ſober Chriſtians, whether this be not the caſe of Chriſtianity at this day? and if ſo, how ſad a ſymptom is it of its decay and languiſhment?

To prevent which, what better expedient can we find out, than to teach men the true worth and value of Religion, and perſwade them to entertain a regard and eſteem for it, ſutable to the dignity thereof. But becauſe general diſcourſes, though never ſo excellent in themſelves, ſeldom prove very effectual; not for any defect in them, but for want of a due capacity in thoſe to whom they are delivered; who being for the moſt part either ignorant or prejudicate perſons, or cannot, or will not apply them to the particular inſtances and duties of their Religion.

For this reaſon I have fix'd my thoughts upon one great and neceſſary duty, viz. Receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. *A thing, which by the command of Chriſt, we ſtand obliged to do, and do often in remembrance of him. Wherein*

the dying love of the bleſſed Jeſus is ſo lively repreſented to us, as cannot chuſe but mightily affect our minds. Can we think of what he hath done and ſuffered for us, and yet be wanting in thoſe dutiful returns, and grateful acknowledgements that are due to him? Can we behold thoſe wounds that our ſins have given him, without a tranſportation of mind, and an holy indignation againſt our ſelves for it? Can we ſee him in his gore blood praying, intreating and beſeeching us to be reconciled to him, without melting into tears, and humbling our ſelves in duſt and aſhes?

To make men in love with their Religion, and particularly with this great and almoſt neglected part of it, was my deſign in firſt framing this Diſcourſe; and for this very end have I ſuffered it to look abroad, and do humbly and heartily pray, that God Almighty would ſecond my deſign with his bleſſing, and make it ſerviceable to men for their good.

I have all along induſtriouſly avoided thoſe knotty controverſies which have made ſo much noiſe in the World about this Sacrament, looking upon them as things fitter to amuſe than edify. I have endeavoured

endeavoured to entertain my Reader, not with words, but matter; not with Rhetorical flouriſhes, but plain truth. I have endeavoured to repreſent this holy Sacrament in its native and primitive dreſs, to acquaint my Reader, with the true, plain, and genuine notion of it, without the additions of Popiſh Superſtition and Idolatry on the one hand, or Fanatical miſconceivings and miſrepreſentations on the other. I have laboured to eaſe the minds of men of thoſe fears and jealouſies, thoſe ſcruples, doubts and objections, which they have been taught to make againſt their own happineſs. I have furniſhed them with ſome rules which may direct them in their preparation for this holy Feaſt. I have acquainted them how they ought to behave themſelves when they are at Gods Table, and what will be expected from them after they have been there. And all this with the greateſt plainneſs in the World.

This, Reader, is the ſubſtance of this little Book, which I now commit into thy hands, only begging this of thee, That to the reading of it, thou wouldſt bring a ſober and unbiaſſed mind, void of paſſion and prejudice, willing to be informed,

ed, and ready to embrace truth for truth's ſake; being deſirous, not only to know, but as ready to do thy duty when it is known. If I can but obtain this of thee, I do not doubt but that by God's bleſſing upon thine and my Endeavours, thou wilt find comfort and advantage by it. Which that thou mayeſt do, now is, and ever ſhall be the humble and hearty Prayer of the Author of it.

A DIA-

A DIALOGUE Between PASTOR AND *PARISHIONER* Touching the SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Paſtor. GOod Morrow, Neighbour *Pariſhioner*, 'pray which way are you travelling this Morning?

Pariſhioner. A good Morning to you, Mr *Paſtor*; by ſo happily meeting with you, my Journey is at an end, for I was going to wait upon you.

Paſtor. Good Wits, they ſay, will jump ſometimes, and ſo I ſee will good intentions too, for my deſign was to make you a viſit this Morning.

Pariſhioner. I thank you, good Mr. *Paſtor*, for your kind intentions, and 'pray let not my meeting with you divert them.

Paſtor. I am not willing to loſe the end of my Journey, nor would I have you loſe yours; and therefore when I know whether my going with you, or your going with me, will better ſerve the deſign of us both, I ſhall readily comply with either.

Pariſhioner. I do not know, Sir, what your deſign in coming to me may be, though I am well aſſured

aſſured it muſt be good and kind; but mine in coming to you, was not only to pay my reſpects, but to receive a kindneſs from you.

Paſtor. I thank you for your Civility, and if it be in my power to anſwer your deſires, you may reſt aſſured that I will not be wanting in my endeavours. You have nothing to do therefore but only to make known what kindneſs that is which you expect from me.

Pariſhioner. That which I have to deſire of you is a matter of great moment. It is the greateſt kindneſs that I can deſire of, or expect from, any one in this World.

Paſtor. The greater the better, provided it be but in my power to do it, and therefore 'pray be free to let me know it.

Pariſhioner. Sir, You are placed here, by the appointment of Di-

vine Providence, as my Spiritual Guide, to inſtruct me in the true Worſhip of God, and direct me in the right way to Heaven and Happineſs. I am to preſume that your Lips preſerve Knowledge, and therefore at your Mouth I am to enquire for it. Your work, I know, is very great, and your charge weighty; you ſtand charged with the Salvation of all our Souls. But as your concern is great, ſo ours cannot be little; Our Souls lie at ſtake, it is our Salvation that is endeavoured, and therefore it is certainly our duty to do what we can in order thereunto; which if we refuſe or neglect to do, all your endeavours, though never ſo great and good, will, as to us, prove vain and fruitleſs. I very well know, that if you faithfully diſcharge your duty, you may thereby pleaſe God, and ſave your own Soul; but

but if we in the mean time neglect ours, notwithſtanding all your diligence, we may periſh, and our blood will be upon our own heads. Theſe thoughts for ſome time have very much troubled me, and I have long conſidered with my ſelf, what was beſt for me to do; at length I found that all my hopes of happineſs, both here and hereafter, did depend upon my Religion, and that if I did not piouſly and devoutly ſerve and worſhip God, I could have no reaſon to expect either his bleſſing and protection in this World, or to have any part in that bleſſed ſtate in the World to come. Now ſeeing Religion is a thing of ſo mighty concern to the Sons of men, there can be nothing ſurely, the knowledge whereof ought more to be deſired and endeavoured. I have oftentimes therefore had it in my thoughts to

wait upon you, and to desire your direction and instruction therein; and though hitherto something or other hath always prevented me; yet finding of late one main duty of our Religion, in a more than usual manner pressed upon us, and believing that it did require our most sober thoughts, and serious considerations; this did revive and heighten my resolution of waiting on you; But when I heard in publick your pious and charitable Declaration to all your People, how ready and willing, nay how glad you would be to spend your time, in setting their minds right in this great affair; I was thereby so encouraged, that I was impatient of any delay; and upon that very account, and for that very end, I was now coming to wait on you.

Pastor. And for this very end, I was now coming to visit you; and

and I hope that good God who hath inſpired us both with the ſame thoughts, will bleſs both our deſigns, and make that communication we are now about to enter upon, to be in the end of great comfort and advantage to us both. But this place not being altogether ſo convenient, I will deſire you to walk to my Houſe, where we will retire into my Cloſet, and being there ſequeſtred from all noiſe and diſturbance, we may calmly and quietly debate between our ſelves, whatſoever is thought fit to be propounded by either of us.

Pariſhioner. I thank you, Mr. *Paſtor*, for your kind offer and invitation, and do willingly accept of it; and I do aſſure you, that I come with a mind void of all paſſion and prejudice, ready prepared with all humility and meekneſs to receive ſuch wholeſome

inſtructions as I hope to receive from you.

Paſtor. I am glad to find you in ſo good a temper, and that you have ſo great a ſenſe of Religion and the duties of it. This gives me good hope, that before we part, we ſhall both of us have occaſion to bleſs God for this meeting.

Pariſhioner. I am of that opinion too, Sir, and to that end do make it my hearty Prayer to God, that he would be pleaſed to give his bleſſing to what we go about.

Paſtor. Well, Neighbour *Pariſhioner*, you are heartily welcome, and the more welcome, becauſe you now viſit me upon ſo pious and ſo religious an account. And though you tell me, that at this time you expect a kindneſs from me, yet I moſt freely acknowledge, you do me the greateſt kindneſs imaginable.

For,

For, you give me an opportunity to do good, and to do it in that place and ſtation which God hath appointed me. 'Pray therefore ſit down, and conſider with your ſelf what you have to propound; be free in it, and confidently expect all the ſober ſatisfaction I am able to give you.

Pariſhioner. I once more heartily thank you, Mr. *Paſtor*, both for your welcome, and the freedom you give me. I have indeed much to ſay, and more than I think will be convenient at this time. I confeſs I am too too ignorant of my Religion, and therefore ſhould be very deſirous to be inſtructed in all the principles of it. But this I am ſenſible is a great work, and will require both more time, and more conſideration than this occaſional meeting and diſcourſe will admit of. That therefore which I ſhall now con-

fine my ſelf to, and deſire to be inſtructed in, is that great Ordinance which you now invite us to, I mean the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Paſtor. My good Neighbour, There is nothing either in this particular, nor in any other part of the Chriſtian Religion, which at fit times and due ſeaſons I ſhall not be always ready to inſtruct you in, to the utmoſt of my ſmall abilities. But ſince you confine your ſelf to one only inſtance at preſent, What is it, I pray, that you ſcruple at, or deſire to be better inſtructed in as to that particular?

Pariſhioner. Sir, You have of late invited us to this great Feaſt, and that with all the earneſtneſs imaginable; you have told us, that it is a duty incumbent upon us, and that by vertue of a divine command, you have endeavoured

voured to make out the great and indiſpenſible neceſſity of it. And I do find that our Governours both in Church and State, by their Sanctions both Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, do, what in them lieth, to enforce this command, and exact from us the performance of this duty. Now, Sir, for my own part, I muſt ingenuouſly acknowledge, that I cannot conceive what deſign or intereſt you can have to impoſe a lie, a falſhood upon your people; to tell them that it is commanded by God, if it were not really ſo; eſpecially when I conſider that the ſacred Records are in the hands of all men; and if it were not ſo, the folly and falſity of ſuch an aſſertion might eaſily be detected. Nor can I believe, that either God would command it, or our Governours exact our compliance with, and obedience to that command; if

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it were not a thing both neceſſary, good and fit to be done. But, Sir, we have been of late times taught by other Miniſters, that though it be a duty, yet it is a dangerous one; who have ſo repreſented the thing unto us as the moſt frightful *Mormo*, and the greateſt Bugbear in the World; who have given it ſuch a Character, and put it into ſuch a dreſs, as if they had deſigned thereby not to allure and invite, but to deter and affright men from having any thing to do with it. This I confeſs hath very much puzled my mind, and not only mine, but that of many others, who I hope are very honeſt and well-meaning Chriſtians; This hath raiſed ſuch a ſtorm in the minds of men, as hath made them ſo ſtaggering and unreſolved, ſo fearful to do what perhaps they are ſatisfied they ought to do. To take off this

fright therefore, and reſtore my mind to a calm, quiet, and peaceable temper again, I deſire you would inform my judgment in the true nature and notion of this holy Sacrament.

Paſtor. That I have of late, with great earneſtneſs, invited you to this holy Feaſt, and perſwaded you thereunto, as to a duty that is abſolutely and indiſpenſibly neceſſary by vertue of the inſtitution and command of our bleſſed Saviour. And that our Governours both in Church and State have taken cognizance of the great neglect of this duty, and are at this time very deſirous to reduce men to a right underſtanding of this great Ordinance, and a reformation of their practice touching the ſame, is all of it very true. But notwithſtanding their care, and our endeavours in obedience both to God and them;

yet

yet we find people very averſe thereunto, mighty unwilling to do their duties, though it be their greateſt concern ſo to do. And probably this their backwardneſs may proceed from that very reaſon which you mention, *viz.* the inconſiderate raſhneſs, and intemperate zeal of ſome, who in the times of confuſion have uſurped the Office of the Miniſtery, and either out of deſign, or for want of underſtanding, or both, have put ſuch a frightful character upon this holy Ordinance, as hath unſetled and diſtracted the minds of many well-meaning Chriſtians. How much theſe men have to anſwer for, who by this means have broken the Communion, and diſturbed the peace of the beſt reformed, and moſt flouriſhing Chriſtian Church in the whole World, they themſelves will one day find. But I am glad to find you

you ſo well inclined, as to deſire to have your Judgment better informed, that being the only true way to ſettle your mind, and reſtore it to a calm, quiet and peaceable temper again.

To ſatisfy therefore this your ſo juſt and godly deſire, I ſhall endeavour with all plainneſs to acquaint you with the genuine and true notion of this holy Sacrament; but in order thereunto, it may be convenient that in the firſt place I give you ſome account of Sacraments in general.

Sacraments are either properly or improperly ſo called.

A Sacrament improperly ſo called is, when the word is uſed in a large ſence for any ſacred rite, or religious duty. And thus both the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Writers uſe the word; for, thoſe, who have been converſant in the Writings of the former, tell us, that many

of

of their ſacred Rites are by them called by that name. And thoſe who have narrowly ſearched the Records of the ancient Fathers ſince the Inſtitution of Chriſtianity have obſerved, That all or moſt Articles which are peculiar to Chriſtian Faith, and all or moſt duties of Religion, containing that which ſenſe or natural reaſon cannot of it ſelf diſcern, are by them commonly called Sacraments. And in this ſence the Church of *Rome*, inſtead of her ſeven Sacraments, may reckon ſeventy, or ſevenſcore, or more if ſhe pleaſe.

But there are Sacraments properly ſo called, when in a reſtrained ſence we apply the word to ſome few principal divine Ceremonies, and then it imports in every ſuch Ceremony two things, *viz.* The ſubſtance of the Ceremony it ſelf, which is viſible: and ſomewhat elſe which is more ſecret,

ſecret, in reference whereunto we conceive that Ceremony to be a Sacrament.

Of this latter ſort we now underſtand the Word, and of this kind we meet with two only in the Old Teſtament, *viz.* Circumciſion and the Paſsover; and correſpondent thereunto we find two only in the New Teſtament, *viz.* Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper.

The Word, *Sacrament*, is variouſly taken, and according to the different acceptations of it diverſly defined.

Sometimes it is taken for the ſign only, and then it is ſtiled, A viſible ſign of inviſible grace.

Sometimes, it is taken for the thing ſignified only, and then it is called, The free mercy of God offered to us in and by Chriſt.

Sometimes it is taken for the whole, *viz.* both for the ſign and the thing ſignified, and the whole action

action thereabout; and then it is ſaid to be, A Teſtimony confirming by an external ſign the wholeſome promiſes of God to Believers, and as it were engraving them in their minds.

All which is compendiouſly delivered to us in our Church-Catechiſm, in Anſwer to that Queſtion, *What meaneſt thou by this Word Sacrament?* The Anſwer whereunto is this, *I mean an outward and viſible ſign of an inward and ſpiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Chriſt himſelf, as a means whereby we receive the ſame, and a pledge to aſſure us thereof.*

From all which it appears, that there are four Conditions requiſite in every Sacrament properly ſo called, the want of any of which will overthrow the whole notion and nature of it.

1. It muſt be of divine Inſtitution. For, being a Seal of a divine

vine promiſe of Eternal Life, and ſuch ſpiritual Grace as none can give but only God; It cannot be inſtituted either by the Apoſtles, or holy Angels, or any other but only God. And therefore our Church, when ſhe defineth a Sacrament of the New Teſtament, maketh this a neceſſary part of her definition, that it is ordained by Chriſt himſelf. Hence is it, that the Evangeliſts, when they relate the Hiſtory of the Inſtitution of this Sacrament, are ſo careful to mention the Author and Inſtituter of it. And St. *Paul* perſwading the Church of *Corinth* to a due and orderly Celebration of this Sacrament, is careful to acquaint them, That what he delivered unto them, he had received from the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23.

2. It muſt have ſome viſible ſign. For, Sacraments are therefore

fore uſed, that by viſible ſigns we may know and comprehend Heavenly and inviſible things; and therefore our Church in her definition of a Sacrament, calleth it, *An outward and viſible ſign of an inward and ſpiritual grace.*

3. It muſt have a divine Promiſe added to the ſign, that ſo the thing ſignified may be united therewith. The promiſe muſt import ſpiritual grace here, and Eternal Life hereafter. Which Promiſe is as it were the Soul of the Sacrament: for, as man conſiſts of Body and Soul, ſo a Sacrament conſiſts of a ſign and thing ſignified. And this is the inward and ſpiritual grace mentioned in the Definition.

4. It muſt be given to the whole Church as a perpetual ſign, *viz.* as long as the outward form of the Church inſtituted by God ſhall continue. For, the Law concerning

concerning the form of outward Worſhip being changed, the uſe of thoſe Sacraments which were inſtituted during the continuance of that form, is alſo changed. So the Sacraments of the Old Teſtament are not now uſed in the New, becauſe the external Form of God's Worſhip is now changed. So likewiſe Anointing, the gift of Miracles, *&c.* though they were given to the Church of the New Teſtament, yet becauſe they were neither given to the whole Church, nor for perpetuity, they cannot properly be called Sacraments.

Theſe are thoſe four Conditions, which ought jointly to meet in every Sacrament properly ſo called. For, Whatſoever wants a divine Inſtitution, a viſible ſign, a divine promiſe added to that ſign, and a coæval duration with the external Form of God's Worſhip

ſhip in that Church to which it is given, cannot properly be called a Sacrament.

This ſhort account of Sacraments in general, I thought fit to premiſe, looking upon it as a good preparative for the better underſtanding of the true notion of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper in particular.

Pariſhioner. I heartily thank you, Mr. *Paſtor*, for the pains you have taken in thus clearing the way. You have furniſhed me with a better notion of Sacraments, than I had before; and thereby given me ſo great ſatisfaction, that you ſhall not need to beſpeak my attention hereafter. I beſeech you therefore, ſince you have well diſpatched the notion of Sacraments in general, that you would now proceed to that of the Lord's Supper in particular.

Paſtor.

Paſtor. I ſhall very willingly comply with your deſire, and in ſo doing I ſhall endeavour to do theſe two things: I. To ſhow you plainly what notion you ought to have of the Lord's Supper. II. That the Celebration thereof is a duty incumbent upon us by vertue of a divine Command.

I. We muſt look upon this Supper as a Sacrament properly ſo called. I have already ſhown you what conditions are requiſite to conſtitute ſuch a Sacrament; and if I make it appear that all thoſe conditions are to be found in this, then may it be juſtly reckoned as one of that number.

The Conditions I told you were theſe four.

1. A Divine Inſtitution. Now that this holy Supper was inſtituted and ordained by Chriſt, that it owes its Original to none other but

but only the Son of God and our Saviour, will plainly appear from the concurrent teſtimonies of St. *Matthew*, St. *Mark*, and St. *Luke*. St. *Matthew* gives us this account of it: *As they were eating, Jeſus took Bread, and bleſſed it, and brake it, and gave it to the Diſciples, and ſaid, Take, Eat; This is my Body. And he took the Cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, ſaying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood of the New Teſtament, which is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins. But I ſay unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the Vine, until that day, when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom. And when they had ſung an Hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.*

Matth. 26. v. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

Much to the ſame purpoſe is that account which St. *Mark* gives of it: *And as they did eat, Jeſus*

Jeſus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to them, and ſaid, Take, Eat, this is my Body. Alſo he took the Cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he ſaid unto them, This is my blood of the New Teſtament which is ſhed for many. Verily, I ſay unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the Vine until that day, that I drink it new in the Kingdom of God. And when they had ſung an Hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives. Mark 14. *v.* 22, 23, 24, 25, 26.

St. *Luke* alſo, with little variation, gives the ſame account. *And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he brake it, and gave it to them, ſaying, This is my body which is given for you, this do in remembrance of me. Likewiſe alſo after Supper he took the Cup, ſaying, This Cup is the* Luke 22. *v.* 19, 20.

New Teſtament in my blood, which is ſhed for you.

And if we call in St. *Paul* to give his ſuffrage with theſe three Evangeliſts, we ſhall find him according with them all in the Hiſtory of the Sacrament and the Inſtitution of it, but moſt expreſly with St. *Luke*; 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24, 25, 26. *I have received of the Lord that which I alſo have delivered unto you, That the Lord Jeſus the ſame night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and ſaid, Take, Eat, This is my body which is broken for you, this do ye in remembrance of me. After the ſame manner he took the Cup when he had ſupped, ſaying, This Cup is the new Teſtament in my blood, this do, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For, as often as you eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do ſhew* (or *ſhew ye*) *forth the Lord's Death till he come.* Thus

Thus have I ſhown you all thoſe Scriptures, which give any account of the Hiſtory of this Sacrament and the inſtitution of it, and you ſee plainly, they do all agree, that it was ordained and inſtituted by Chriſt; that it owes its Original to none other but only the Son of God, the Lord's Chriſt, and our Jeſus: and if ſo, then the firſt thing requiſite for the conſtitution of a Sacrament properly ſo called, *viz.* A Divine Inſtitution, doth evidently appear in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

2. The ſecond thing requiſite for the conſtitution of a Sacrament properly ſo called, is a viſible ſign. And that there are ſuch things in the Lord's Supper, is viſible and apparent; for, by the words of Inſtitution, Bread and Wine, which are ſubſtantial and viſible things, are appointed to be

the Elements thereof. And though theſe in their own eſſence and nature, do nothing differ from common Bread and Wine, yet in regard of their deſignation and uſe, they do very much differ therefrom. For, in this holy Supper they are deſigned for, and uſed as outward and viſible ſigns of inward and ſpiritual grace, and in reſpect of that ſecret thing which is hidden under them, and repreſented by them, they become Sacramental.

3. The third thing requiſite for the conſtitution of a Sacrament properly ſo called, is a divine promiſe added to the ſign, which importing ſpiritual grace here, and eternal life hereafter, may firmly unite the ſign, and thing ſignified; and that this is to be found in the Lord's Supper is plain from the words of inſtitution, where the Bread bleſſed

and

and broken is called the Body of Chriſt, and the Cup, the New Teſtament in his blood, which is ſhed for many, for the remiſſion of ſins. And our Saviour expreſly ſaith, *John* 6. 35. *I am the bread of life, he that cometh unto me ſhall not hunger, and he that believeth on me ſhall never thirſt.* And again, *v.* 54, 55, 56. *Whoſoever eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day. For, my fleſh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* Which plainly declareth an Union of the ſign and thing ſignified, by vertue of a divine word and promiſe; in which Union conſiſts the nature of a Sacrament properly ſo called.

4. The fourth thing requiſite for the conſtitution of a Sacrament properly ſo called is, That

it be given to the whole Church as a perpetual ſign, to continue ſo long, as the external form of divine Worſhip, inſtituted by God, doth remain in that Church. Now that this was given to the whole Church, appears plainly, from the inſtitution of it, for the Diſciples to whom it was firſt given were the Repreſentatives of the whole Church; And that it was given for perpetuity, ſeemeth plain from thoſe words of our bleſſed Saviour, *Matth.* 26. 29. *I ſay unto you, that I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the Vine until that day, when I ſhall drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom.* In which words the Holy Jeſus ſeemeth to intimate two things to his Diſciples: 1. That this was the laſt time that he ſhould ever celebrate this Feaſt with them in this World. 2. That though they were not to expect his

his Company, his Bodily preſence; yet they and the whole Church repreſented by them, ſhould keep up the obſervation of this Feaſt, till they met again to celebrate an Eternal Feaſt in his Father's Kingdom. And that this latter was deſigned by him, is evident from thoſe words of St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 11. 26. *As often as ye do eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do ſhew* (or *ſhew ye*) *forth the Lord's Death till he come.*

Thus have I ſhown you, that thoſe four Conditions which are thought neceſſary to the conſtitution of a Sacrament properly ſo called, are all to be found in this; and therefore this may deſervedly be reckoned as one of that number.

But to make the notion of this Sacrament, yet more plain to you, let us conſider by what names it is uſually known in holy Scripture. It is called a Supper,

and the Lord's Supper, 1 *Cor.* 11. 20. It is alſo called a Feaſt, and a Feaſt upon a Sacrifice, 1 *Cor.* 5. 7,8. *Chriſt our Paſsover is ſacrificed for us, Therefore let us keep the Feaſt*, ſaith St. *Paul.* When therefore you fix your thoughts upon this holy Sacrament, with a deſign to celebrate the ſame; let me deſire you to look upon it, 1. As a Feaſt: 2. As a Feaſt upon a Sacrifice: 3. As a Feaſt upon a Sacrifice for ſin.

1. Conſider it as a divine Feaſt which our Lord hath appointed to be kept in Commemoration of himſelf. The cheer provided, *viz.* Bread and Wine, and the Body and blood of Chriſt; The actions about it, *viz.* Receiving, Eating, and Drinking; The names given to it, *viz.* Breaking of Bread, and the Lord's Supper; The deſign thereof, which is to nouriſh up the members of Chriſt's Church unto

unto Eternal Life; do all of them ſufficiently ſpeak this notion of it. And that it was ordained to be a Commemoration-Feaſt, the very words of Inſtitution tell us, which ſay, *This do, in remembrance of me,* Luke 22. v. 19.

Nor were theſe kind of Feaſts unuſual in the World, both before and at that time. For, as the Hebrews had their Feaſts, which were commonly ſignified by ſetting on Bread, or Eating Bread. So the Greeks alſo had their ſober Compotations. At which Feaſts they did uſually commemorate the worthy actions, and glorious Examples of ſome memorable perſons. And this, no doubt, was the deſign of this moſt holy Feaſt, wherein Chriſtians have the honour, not only to feaſt with, but upon God; the holy Jeſus being both the Maſter of it, and the

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cheer provided in it. Wherein we have an opportunity of feasting with one another, thereby the better to promote and preserve amity, love and charity among our selves, to keep up a lasting remembrance of our glorious Redeemer, and to fix more deeply in our minds all that he hath done and suffered for us. Hereby shall we be the better disposed with all thankfulness and humility to embrace such opportunities when offered, with greater joy and alacrity to address our selves thereunto, and made the more careful, that in a becoming manner we appear before our Lord and Master therein. In a word, by this Commemoration-Feast, we shall be the better disposed, and hold our selves the more obliged, to a cheerful observance of our Redeemer's Will, and to pay a sincere and entire

obedience

obedience to all his Laws.

2. Conſider it not only as a Feaſt, but as a Feaſt upon a Sacrifice, wherein we are more particularly to commemorate the ſufferings and death of our bleſſed Saviour. St. *Paul* doth very well explain thoſe words of Chriſt, [*Do this in remembrance of me, Luke* 22. 19.] when he ſaith, [*As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord, ye ſhew forth the Lord's Death till he come,* 1 *Cor.* 11. 26.] thereby teaching us, that we ought herein to commemorate the dying love of the holy Jeſus, with ſuch ſuitable praiſes and thankſgivings as may be agreeable to that great goodneſs which he expreſſed by dying for us.

As in all Feaſts of this kind both among the Jews and Gentiles, God had his Portion, and the people had their portion, wherewith to entertain themſelves and

their

their Friends; ſo in this Chriſtian Feaſt, we alſo are made partakers of the Sacrifice, in that by theſe repreſentations of the Body and Blood of Chriſt Jeſus, we are admitted to feaſt upon it.

And as by eating of the Sacrifices offered at the Altar, both Jews and Gentiles profeſſed themſelves to be the Worſhippers and Servants of that God to whom the oblation was offered; ſo we, by partaking of this holy Feaſt, do make a ſolemn profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, of our Faith in Jeſus, and obedience to him. We declare our ſelves to be the Diſciples and Followers of him, to whom we join our ſelves in Communion.

Eating and Drinking together was always eſteemed a ſign of Friendſhip, and good underſtanding, between the parties ſo doing. But when a Feaſt was made

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on purpoſe to expreſs their Friendſhip, then was it the more notorious. But when the Feaſt was upon a Sacrifice, then the obligation between them was held the more ſacred and inviolable. We therefore by being partakers of this holy Feaſt, do thereby engage our ſelves in a mutual Covenant with the bleſſed Jeſus, and by often doing this, we make repeated proteſtations of our fidelity, and renew our Baptiſmal Vow and Covenant, taking (as we uſually ſay) the Sacrament upon it, that in all things we will be faithful and obedient to him.

3. Let us conſider this holy Action, not only as a Feaſt, nor only as a Feaſt upon a Sacrifice, but as a Feaſt upon a Sacrifice for ſin.

That Jeſus Chriſt did offer up himſelf as a Sacrifice for ſin, is ſo plain and evident through the whole Hiſtory of the New Teſtament,

ſtament, that to produce inſtances to atteſt it, would look like an uncharitable cenſure of others; as if they had neglected to peruſe thoſe ſacred Records, which contain the Charter for their Inheritance in Heaven.

Now in the time of the Law, when any Beaſt was ſlain, and offered in Sacrifice for ſin; it was not permitted (in that caſe, nor indeed in any other) neither to the People, nor Prieſts themſelves, to eat of the blood; Nor had they any portion of the fleſh, for that was wholly burn'd. To partake of the ſin-offering therefore was a priviledge reſerved for Chriſtians, who at this holy Feaſt, are allowed both to eat the Bread, (which repreſents the Body or fleſh of Chriſt) and drink the Cup (which repreſents his blood). And in this caſe that of the Apoſtle is fully verified, *We have an*

Altar

Altar (*i. e.* a Sacrifice) *whereof they had no right to eat, who ſerved the Tabernacle*, Hebr. 13. v. 10.

By vertue of this priviledge we are made partakers of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, and all the benefits thereof; We are ſtrengthned and refreſhed in all grace and goodneſs, and the remiſſion of ſins is not only offered, but conveyed to every worthy Communicant. The conſideration whereof, as it ought to beget in us a grateful ſenſe of all God's favours, and of this in particular; ſo ought it to be an Obligation or Bond of Union between all Chriſtian People. For, *If God ſo loved us, we ought alſo to love one another*, 1 John 4. v. 11.

Thus have I performed the former part of my promiſe, by ſhewing you what notion you ought to have of the Lord's Supper; That it is a Sacrament properly ſo called,

called, having all the conditions that are or can be thought neceſſary to conſtitute ſuch a thing. That it is not only a Feaſt, but a Feaſt upon a Sacrifice, and which is more, a Feaſt upon a Sacrifice for Sin. And under ſuch a character as this, I hope it will not appear to you with ſuch a frightful viſage, as you tell me it hath been repreſented to you heretofore.

Pariſhioner. No indeed Sir, Inſtead of a dangerous and dreadful Precipice, I have a plain path now before me; inſtead of terrible and frightful objects, I have a pleaſant and delightful proſpect; inſtead of affrighting, it doth now allure and invite me to it; it ſeemeth to offer me ſuch advantages, as I once thought I could never reaſonably hope for from it. I confeſs, Sir, You have mightily relieved my mind, by removing that preſſure, which prejudice and

and prepoſſeſſion had put upon it. I heartily thank you for the pains you have taken in it, and am ſo well pleaſed and ſatisfied therewith, that, if it be not too great a trouble to you, I would humbly beg the performance of the other part of your promiſe alſo.

Paſtor. No, Neighbour *Pariſhioner*, it will be no trouble to me, I am better pleaſed with doing my duty, than to think it ſo, and therefore if you can but be contented to continue your Patience, I ſhall not, I hope, grow weary of ſo good a work.

II. The *other* part of my promiſe was, To make it evident to you, That the Celebration of this holy Feaſt, is a duty incumbent upon all Chriſtians by vertue of a Divine Command.

And to do this, I ſhall need only to have recourſe to the words

words of inſtitution, as they ſtand recorded by St. *Luke*, and repeated by St. *Paul*. In the Evangeliſt the words run thus, *He took Bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, ſaying, This is my Body which is given for you, This do in remembrance of me. Likewiſe alſo after Supper he took the Cup, ſaying, This Cup is the New Teſtament in my blood, which is ſhed for you.* Luk. 22. 19, 20.

The Apoſtle is ſomewhat more large, taking in the account which the other Evangeliſts alſo give of it, for he tells the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24, 25, 26. *That he had received from the Lord that which he delivered unto them*, viz. *That the Lord Jeſus in the ſame night in which he was betrayed, took Bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and ſaid, Take, Eat, This is my Body which is broken for you., This do ye in remembrance of me.*

*me. After the ſame manner alſo he took the Cup, when he had ſupped, ſaying, This Cup is the New Teſtament in my blood, This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For, as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye ſhew (*or *ſhew ye) forth the Lord's Death until he come.*

Theſe words, as they are recorded by St. *Luke*, are indeed directed to the twelve Apoſtles; but then we are to conſider, that the Apoſtles in that holy action were the Repreſentatives of the whole Church, and therefore to be conſidered under a double capacity, *viz.* either as Governours and Miniſters intruſted by Chriſt with the power of diſpenſing and adminiſtring the Sacrament; or as ordinary and Lay Communicants.

If we look upon them in the former capacity, as Governours of

of the Church, and Stewards of the ſacred myſteries; then the duty to which they are obliged by the expreſs command of Chriſt, is to take the Bread into their hands, to bleſs and conſecrate it to that myſterious and divine uſe to which he deſigned it, to break it, to give it to the Communicants, as he gave it to them: And ſo in like manner to take the Cup, to bleſs it, and give it to the people. Whence it is plain, That there is an unavoidable neceſſity upon them and their Succeſſors, to adminiſter this holy Sacrament. And if they ſtand obliged to give it, then certainly there muſt be ſome who are obliged to receive it. And if we look upon them in the other capacity, as private men, and Lay Communicants, we have a plain evidence hereof. For, it is evident, that in that capacity, their duty in obedience

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to the Command of Chriſt was, to take and receive the conſecrated Elements of Bread and Wine, to Eat and Drink, and to do all this in commemoration of his wonderful love, in giving his Body to be broken, and his Blood to be ſhed for the ſins of the World.

But if we will ſuffer St. *Paul*, who well knew it, to explain the mind of his Maſter, the matter will be yet more plain and evident. For, though he give the ſame account of the Hiſtory of the Sacrament, and the inſtitution of it, as the Evangeliſts do; yet doth he not therein addreſs himſelf to his Fellow-Apoſtles or their Succeſſors, but to the people of the Church of *Corinth*; thereby plainly ſhowing that the Command of our Bleſſed Saviour (*This do*) doth equally oblige both the one and the other. That as the

the Prieſt is bound to prepare and give it, ſo the people are bound to prepare and receive it, and both by vertue of a divine Command.

For, that theſe words (*Do ye this*) were not ſpoken by way of Counſel, but Command, will plainly appear, if we conſider, that whatſoever may be thought requiſite to render any expreſſion preceptive and obligatory; are to be found in this. For, 1. There was ſufficient power and authority in the perſon commanding, *viz.* Jeſus Chriſt, the Eternal Son of God, and our Saviour. 2. The Terms, in which he is pleaſed to ſignify his divine will and pleaſure, are imperative, *Do this.* 3. The obedience which he expects thereunto is to be perpetual, till his coming again, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. 4. St. *Pauls* interpretation and application of this command to the

Lay

Lay Communicants in the Church of *Corinth*, doth plainly ſpeak the deſign of our bleſſed Saviour, which was to oblige them and all Chriſtians to do this in remembrance of him, *i.e.* to expreſs their thankful acknowledgments of what he did and ſuffered for them by their dutiful obedience to this Command.

Thus have I performed the other part of my promiſe to you, and I hope made it ſufficiently plain, that the Celebration of this Feaſt is a duty incumbent upon all Chriſtians by vertue of a Divine Command. And if ſo, then how thoſe who pretend to Chriſtianity, will at the great and general day of Judgment, anſwer their neglect and refuſal of it, I wiſh they would ſeriouſly conſider.

But, my Friend, can you and I reflect upon this as the Command,

mand, and laſt Command of our dying Saviour? Can we remember that he gave his Body to be broken, and his blood to be ſhed for our ſins? Can we think of his being made ſubject to the wrath of God, the hatred of Hell, and the malice of Man, and all this for our ſakes? and that for all this he requireth no more of us, but only to keep a Feaſt, wherein we may ſolemnly commemorate, and perpetuate the memory of what he hath done and ſuffered for us? Can we, I ſay, remember all this, and yet at the ſame time be ſo unkind, ſo ungrateful, and ſo undutiful, as to neglect opportunities when offered, of paying the tribute of our acknowledgment to our great Saviour, and mighty Redeemer? To cloſe up this Argument, let me only read unto you one place of Scripture, and deſire you ſeriouſly to conſider it:

it: John 6. v. 54, 55, 56. *Except ye eat the fleſh of the ſon of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoſo eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my Blood, hath Eternal Life, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day. For, my fleſh is meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed. He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* The inference from which words, as they relate to this holy Feaſt, is plain and eaſy, *viz.* That as it is highly neceſſary for all who would be ſaved, to be made partakers of the merits of Chriſt's Sacrifice, and the efficacy of his Death and Sufferings; ſo will it as highly concern them (who have an opportunity to do it) to partake of the Lord's Supper in order thereunto: For, thoſe who refuſe (when they may) to receive the tokens and ſigns of his Body broken, and Blood ſhed for

their ſins, and perſiſt in that refuſal and neglect; can never hope to be owned and rewarded by him, as his Friends.

Pariſhioner. I muſt needs own, Sir, that you have very well acquitted your ſelf in the performance of what you promiſed. I am better inſtructed in the nature and notion of this holy Sacrament than I was before; and am now very well ſatisfied, that the Celebration of it is a duty upon me and all Chriſtians, by vertue of a Divine Command. But, Sir, I have ſtill ſome ſcruples upon me, which (if I did not fear I had too much tired you already) I would have propounded, in order to your reſolution of them.

Paſtor. Let not any ſuch fear trouble you, I neither am nor can be weary of well doing. If therefore you have any thing to offer, be free in it; and aſſure your ſelf of

of my utmoſt endeavour to give you ſatisfaction.

Pariſhioner. Sir, You oblige me very much, and ſeeing you are pleaſed to give me that freedom, I will preſume to make uſe of it.

Obj. 1. And the firſt thing I ſhall propound, and deſire to be reſolved in is this: Whether this duty be ſo ſtrictly enjoined, and ſo indiſpenſibly required of all Chriſtians, that none of them are left at liberty, either to Communicate or not, as they ſhall think fit?

Paſtor. This Query ſeems to anſwer it ſelf; for

1. It ſuppoſeth the thing in queſtion to be a Duty, and if ſo, then it ought to be out of queſtion; for every Duty implieth an obligation, and every obligation layeth a reſtraint upon liberty, and taketh away the indifferency

of the thing it obligeth to: To be at liberty therefore either to do, or not do a thing, muſt ſuppoſe the thing, not only to be indifferent in its nature, but alſo to be free from any command or obligation, and ſo conſequently to be no duty at all, but only a prudential Act, which a man may either do, or leave undone, as he in his diſcretion ſhall ſee cauſe.

2. It ſuppoſeth the thing in queſtion to be a Duty enjoined, which implyeth a ſuperiour power, endued with full and juſt authority to impoſe the thing, and by that impoſition to make it neceſſary. Now that power, I have told you, is God, and that authority Divine, which maketh the thing required to be a duty upon us, by vertue of a Divine Command. So that unleſs you can aſſign any power ſuperiour to that of God, which can and doth diſpenſe

penſe with his Commands, you can never fancy to your ſelf any ſuch liberty, as you ſeem here to enquire after.

Theſe two conſiderations might ſuffice to overthrow this pretence of liberty, and ſhow the neceſſity of the thing required; but becauſe I would willingly quiet your mind, and give you all the ſatisfaction that I can, I ſhall offer a few things more to your conſideration, and deſire you to ſpend ſome ſerious thoughts upon them.

1. Conſider the extent of the Command, and the unlimited obligation thereof. The word of Command [*Do this*] is general and indeterminate, it reacheth all Chriſtians, in all times, and in all places; and when all are included, none are exempted. And the obligation of duty and obedience thereunto, is as general as

the Command. For, unleſs we will call in queſtion the power and authority of God and Chriſt, we muſt needs acknowledge, that to whomſoever it is ſaid, *Do this*, they ſtand obliged both in duty and conſcience to yield obedience thereunto. If therefore the command reach all, then the thing commanded muſt needs be a duty incumbent upon all. And indeed I know no other limitation that this divine Command admits of, ſave only one of theſe two, *viz.* Either want of opportunity, as when men are in a Journey, in ſuch a place, and under ſuch circumſtances, that though they do earneſtly deſire it, yet can they not, for want of an opportunity, do the thing they deſire: Or ſome juſt impediment, as when one is under a Church-cenſure, or ſome indiſpoſition which at preſent he cannot conquer. In the former

former of theſe Caſes men muſt, in the latter they may, forbear the doing of the thing required; Theſe Caſes may limit, but they do not leſſen the Duty; They may ſuffice as excuſes for the preſent, but they will not ſerve always: For, ſo ſoon as an opportunity can be had, and the impediments be removed, the obligation will return upon us, and in obedience to this Command we ought to apply our ſelves to the performance of the duty required therein.

2. Conſider, That to diſobey the command of God, when we have an opportunity, and no juſt impediment to hinder us from yielding obedience thereunto, is not only a ſin, but a ſin of a deep die; tinctured with ſo much pride and obſtinacy, and attended with ſuch aggravations, as maketh it not only highly diſpleaſing unto God,

but (if not timely repented of) will render it deſtructive to our ſelves. This is to add ſin to ſin, and by that means, to heap up wrath againſt the day of wrath upon our own heads. Now, that to [*Do this*] is a duty incumbent upon us by vertue of a Divine Command, I have plainly ſhown you, and the want of opportunity you have no reaſon to complain of, being ſo often, and ſo earneſtly invited thereunto; And therefore unleſs you have ſome juſt impediment to hinder your preſent compliance with that command, you have no reaſon to decline your duty, nor any cauſe to fancy to your ſelf ſuch a liberty, as you now enquire after.

3. Conſider, That the ſolemn profeſſion of our Chriſtian Faith according to Gods Ordinance, is a Duty which all Chriſtians ought moſt

moſt readily, and upon every juſt occaſion to perform, *Luke* 12. 8, 9. *Whoſoever ſhall confeſs me before men, him ſhall the ſon of man confeſs alſo before the Angels of God. But he that ſhall deny me before men, ſhall be denied before the Angels of God*, ſaith our bleſſed Saviour. Thereby plainly intimating, that whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed to own him, and to confeſs their Faith in him, in this World, them will he diſown and be aſhamed of at the great and laſt day. Now the Celebration of this holy Feaſt, is one of the moſt memorable actions of our life, wherein we are moſt ſolemnly to Commemorate the dying love of the bleſſed Jeſus, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24, 26. *For, this we ought to do in remembrance of him*; *And as often as we do it, we are to ſhew forth the Lord's death till he come*, i. e. We are herein to commemorate all that the holy

Jeſus hath done and ſuffered for us, and not be aſhamed to confeſs our Faith in a dying Saviour. And that all this is according to God's Ordinance, is plain, becauſe it is a duty incumbent upon us by vertue of a Divine Command. Unleſs therefore you can diſpenſe with your duty to God, and content your ſelf to diſſemble your Chriſtianity; unleſs you can perſwade your ſelf, that the profeſſion of your Faith in Jeſus, a thankful acknowledgment of all that he hath done and ſuffered for you, and a publick owning of all thoſe favours and benefits which you have received from him, be things indifferent to you: It will be in vain to pretend ſuch a liberty as you now enquire after.

By this time, Neighbour *Pariſhioner*, I hope you are ſatisfied, that neither you, nor any other who pretend to Chriſtianity, are left

left at liberty in this caſe; That to (*Do this*) or leave it *Undone*, as they pleaſe, is no part of that liberty, wherewith Chriſt hath made them free.

Pariſhioner. I thank you, Mr. *Paſtor*, for the pains you have taken with me, which, by God's bleſſing upon them, have not been in vain; they have had their deſign'd effect: for, I am now very well ſatisfied, that it is not a thing indifferent, but a Duty. But pray, Sir, be not offended, if I trouble you with another Queſtion.

Paſtor. No, my good Neighbour, I ſhall not; pray be free, and reſt aſſured that you cannot better pleaſe me, than by giving me an opportunity of offering you all the ſatisfaction that is in my power.

Pariſhioner. My next Queſtion, Sir, is this.

Obj. 2. If this command be ſo ſtrict

ſtrict and general, and our obedience thereto ſo indiſpenſible, are not all then who live within the pale of the Church, whether good or bad, without any exception, to be admitted thereunto?

Paſtor. You may remember, that in anſwer to your former Queſtion, I did intimate to you, that there are ſome caſes, which though they do not leſſen the Duty, yet do limit the command as to our preſent actual obedience thereunto. For, as our Saviour forbade the caſting of Pearl before Swine, and the giving of the Childrens Bread to Dogs; ſo hath he left power with his Church to make a difference between worthy and unworthy Receivers: and, where the caſe is ſo manifeſt as to come within her Cognizance, to judge who are ſo, and who are not. And beſides thoſe caſes before intimated, there are

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ſome other, wherein the Church doth, with good reaſon, take upon her, to reſtrain and keep back ſome from prophaning this holy Sacrament, and ruining themſelves. Eſpecially theſe that follow.

1. When men are groſly ignorant, ſo little knowing in the things of God, ſo much unacquainted with the Religious part of their duties, that in this caſe, what the Prophet *Jonah* ſaid of many thouſands in the great City of *Nineveh*, is but too truly verified in them, *Jonah* 4. 11. *They cannot diſcern between their right hand and their left* hand. And of this ſort, God knows, we have too many in our days, who are ſo ſottiſhly ignorant of what concerns God and themſelves, at leaſt, the better part of themſelves, *viz.* their immortal Souls, that though the light of the Go-

ſpel

ſpel ſhine ſo glorioufly, yet ſtill they ſit in darkneſs; though the glorious truths thereof be daily preached, ſo plainly aſſerted, and ſo frequently inculcated upon them; yet are they no more improved in their knowledge of them, than thoſe poor Indians who never heard of the Goſpel. 'Tis ſtrange indeed there ſhould be ſuch, but not ſo ſtrange as true. Now ſuch as theſe, till they are better inſtructed in their Religion in general, and in this part of their Religion in particular, ought to be withheld from being partakers of this holy Sacrament. For, Our Church ſuppoſeth all thoſe her Members, who either do, or are fit to receive the holy Sacrament, to be *perſons of diſcretion*, i. e. perſons of ſome competent knowledge, able to diſcern between the Table of the Lord, and

Rubrick after the Communion Service.

and their own Tables, between this holy Feaſt, and a common Meal. What meaſure of knowledge there ought to be, ſeeing God hath given us no ſtandard to judge by, I ſhall not preſume my ſelf wiſe enough to determine. But that there ought to be ſome, and a competent ſhare of knowledge too, will appear, if we conſider what qualifications our Church requires in thoſe whom ſhe admitteth to be Communicants. They muſt be ſuch as truly repent them of their former ſins; They muſt be ſuch as ſtedfaſtly purpoſe to lead a new life; ſuch as have a lively Faith in God's mercy through Chriſt; ſuch as thankfully remember the ſufferings and death of the bleſſed Jeſus for their ſakes; and they muſt be in charity with all men. All which do preſuppoſe a good ſhare of knowledge, Ch. Catech.

ledge, and a godly practice of what they know. Besides, all who are admitted to the Lord's Supper, by the Rules of our Church, ought not only to be baptized, but also after Baptism, to be confirmed by the Bishop, or at least to be ready and desirous to be confirmed. Now in order to Confirmation it is required, that they be of a competent age, able to say in their Mother tongue, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and to answer to the other questions in the Church Catechism. The reason whereof is plain, Because in Confirmation they do in the presence of God, and of the Congregation renew that solemn promise and Vow that was made in their names

Rubrick after the Order of Confirmation.

Rubrick after the Catechism.

Preface to the Order of Confirmation.

names at their Baptiſm; ratifying and confirming the ſame in their own perſons; and acknowledging themſelves bound to believe and do all thoſe things which their Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for them. Now all this conſidered will plainly evidence, that perſons who are groſly ignorant, and devoid of ſome competent meaſure of knowledge in their Religion, are not thought by our Church to be duly qualified to be Communicants. Nor doth our Church proceed without good Authority herein; for this her practice ſeems to be founded upon that qualification of a Worthy Communicant, required by St. *Paul*, viz. *Diſcerning the Lord's Body*, 1 Cor. 11. 29.

Pariſhioner. Sir, I am very well ſatisfied that ſuch perſons as you have now deſcribed ought not to be admitted as gueſts at God's Table;

ble; and I am glad to underſtand by your Diſcourſe, that our Church doth not knowingly admit any ſuch. But there is one thing which I perceive the Church maketh a neceſſary qualification in every Communicant, *viz.* Confirmation by the Biſhop. Now, Sir, I never was confirmed, and I believe very few in the Pariſh have been; and therefore if this be neceſſary, all or moſt of us, for want of it, are under a neceſſity of abſenting our ſelves therefrom.

Paſtor. It is true, that by reaſon of the iniquity of the late times, which put all things out of order both in Church and State, moſt who are now grown up do want the benefit of this holy rite; but I am willing to believe, that it is not their contempt of it, but rather either the want of opportunity, or the want of better inſtruction ſince, that is the occaſion

ſion of their not being confirmed. And therefore our Church, like an indulgent Mother, in her new Rubrick, maketh not the want, but the neglect of it, to be a bar againſt us, for ſhe now requireth that all who are admitted to this holy Ordinance, ſhould either be actually confirmed, or ready and deſirous ſo to be. Now when you rightly underſtand the deſign and tendency, the uſefulneſs and excellency of this holy Rite, (which I have hinted to you in part, and of which you may ſee more, if you will but take the pains to read over that ſhort Office for the Order of Confirmation) I do not doubt but you and all others, will be very deſirous of it. And if you be ſo, then is the want of it at preſent, no bar to your preſent communicating with us in this holy Ordinance.

Pariſhioner.

Pariſhioner. I am very well pleaſed, Sir, that it is not; and if the want of it be not, I do aſſure you, the contempt of it, never ſhall be any bar againſt me. By that little which you have ſaid of it, I am ſo well ſatisfied in the excellency and uſefulneſs thereof, that I ſhall not willingly omit any opportunity hereafter of being confirmed. And in order thereunto, I do humbly beg your aſſiſtance therein.

Paſtor. You may promiſe your ſelf my aſſiſtance in this, or any other thing that is for your good at all times. But ſince you are ſo well ſatisfied in this, which hath given occaſion to this ſhort digreſſion, I ſhall now return to the conſideration of your main Objection, and proceed to ſhow you ſome other caſes, wherein our Church thinketh fit to reſtrain the raſhneſs and preſumption of ſome,

ſome, who, without due conſideration, would ruſh upon this holy Ordinance.

2. If men be groſly ſcandalous, open and notorious evil Livers, who make no Conſcience of what they do, who live in Gluttony and Drunkenneſs, in Chambering and wantonneſs, in ſtrife and envying, and take no other thought, ſave only for the Fleſh, to fulfil the luſts of it, *Rom.* 13. 13, 14. Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, Effeminate Perſons, Abuſers of themſelves with Mankind, Thieves, Covetous Perſons, Drunkards, Railers, and Extortioners, as they ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God, ſo neither ought they to be admitted to this holy Sacrament, 1 *Cor.* 6. *v.* 9, 10. And therefore our Church is ſo far from giving encouragement unto ſuch, that ſhe requireth her Miniſters, having

ving knowledge thereof, to call upon them, and advertiſe them, that they do not preſume to come to the Lord's Table, until they have openly declared themſelves to have truly repented, and amended their former evil life.

Can. 26. Rubrick before the Communion.

3. If any have been at ſtrife and variance with their Neighbours, and do ſtill indulge their malice and hatred, refuſing to forgive injuries done to them, or to repair wrongs which they have done to others; Theſe are not to be ſuffered to come to the Lord's Table, till they be, or are willing to be reconciled; till they have forgiven from the bottom of their hearts all that their Neighbours have treſpaſſed againſt them, and have recompenſed, or are willing and reſolved

Can. 26. Rubrick before the Communion.

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ſo to do as ſoon as conveniently they can, all the wrong they have done unto their Neighbours.

4. Churchwardens or Sidemen who have the Oath of God upon them, and have bound their Souls thereby to preſent to their Ordinaries all ſuch enormities and publick offences as they are particularly charged to enquire of in their ſeveral Pariſhes. If theſe (notwithſtanding Can. 26. the obligation of their Oath, and their being frequently called upon by their Miniſter and Ordinary to diſcharge their Conſciences by the due performance of their Duties) ſhall wittingly and willingly, deſperately and irreligiouſly, incur that moſt horrible ſin of perjury, by neglecting or refuſing to preſent ſuch enormities or publick offences, as they themſelves know, or are otherwiſe made known to them. They ought

ought not to be admitted to this holy Sacrament, till they have evidenced their repentance, and repaired their fault by a more vigorous performance of their duties.

5. If men be Schiſmatical, or of known rebellious principles, *i.e.* if they refuſe to comply with the Order of the Church in kneeling at the Sacrament, if they do deſignedly abſent themſelves from the publick Prayers of the Church, if they be common and notorious depravers of the Book of Common-Prayer, and adminiſtration of the Sacraments, *&c.* Or, if they be ſuch as do ſpeak againſt and deprave his Majeſtie's Sovereign Authority in Cauſes Eccleſiaſtical. Except every ſuch perſon ſhall firſt acknowledge to the Miniſter before the Church-Wardens, his repentance for the ſame, and promiſe

Can. 27.

by

by word or writing, that he will do ſo no more; He ſhall not be admitted to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

6. Strangers, *i. e.* perſons of another Pariſh ought not to be encouraged in leaving their own Pariſh Church and going to another, or in leaving their own Miniſter to hear another. Much leſs ought they to be encouraged in deſerting Communion with their own Miniſter and Pariſhioners. Our Church is ſo tender in this point, and ſo far from giving encouragement unto ſuch, that inſtead of admitting, ſhe forbiddeth them, and remitteth them home to their own Pariſh Churches and Miniſters, there to receive the Communion with the reſt of their Neighbours. Can. 28.

In all theſe Caſes, you ſee, our Church is very cautious, and therefore no fear of ſuch an uni-

verſal and promiſcuous admittance to God's Table, as your Objection ſuppoſeth. She is not ſo prodigally laviſh as to caſt her Pearl to Swine, or give her Childrens Bread to Dogs.

But though theſe caſes may limit, yet do they not at all leſſen our Duty. Let our circumſtances be what they will, yet to *Do this*, is ſtill our Duty. To continue therefore under theſe circumſtances muſt needs be ſin, becauſe it hindereth us from doing that which is our duty, and to plead our excuſe for Non-Communion upon that ſcore, is to add ſin to ſin, and double that iniquity, which was too great before.

What therefore is to be done in this caſe? but as ſpeedily as may be to put our ſelves out of theſe circumſtances, that we may the ſooner ſet about the performance of our Duty. Which whoſoever refuſeth

refuſeth or neglecteth to do, he doth plainly declare, that he hath a greater value for his own inordinate luſts, and debaucht practices, than for an holy Communion with God and Chriſt.

Pariſhioner. I am mighty well pleaſed to underſtand, That the Wiſdom and Piety of our Mother, the Church of *England*, (in taking ſo much care to guard the Table of the Lord, and with ſo much caution to fence the Body and Blood of Chriſt, againſt the bold approaches of ignorant, prophane and wicked perſons) is far greater than I thought it had been, or than many will yet believe it is. But, Sir, I have ſomething more ſtill, which, if I did not fear I had too much tired you already, I would gladly be ſatiſfied in.

Paſtor. No more of theſe Apologies, good Neighbour, if your

own leiſure and patience will allow it, mine will hold out. And therefore now we are together, and have ſo fit an opportunity for it, ſpeak your whole mind, and ſpeak it freely, propound what ever ſcruples you have, that I may apply my ſelf to give you all the ſatisfaction I can.

Pariſhioner. I humbly thank you, Sir, for the freedom you are pleaſed to give me, which I ſhall willingly make uſe of.

The next thing I have to propound is a matter of great weight, an Objection that hath and ſtill doth very much ſtartle me, and I believe many others, which if you can clear, your ſo doing will very much ſmooth the way, and encourage both me and them to communicate with you.

Obj. 3. St. *Paul* expreſly ſaith, He *that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation*

to

to himſelf, not diſcerning the Lord's Body, 1 Cor. 11. 29. Now, Sir, I do not find my ſelf worthy, and I hope you would not have me to eat and drink my own Damnation?

Paſtor. This Scripture which you now cite, hath been, and ſtill is made very much uſe of to deter and affright men from doing their duties, from communicating with the Church and People of God in this holy Ordinance. Some men who have uſurped the Pulpit, and invaded the Office of the Miniſtry in our late unhappy times, have with ſo much zeal but little knowledge taken upon them to interpret the holy Scriptures, that they have made them to ſpeak other things than the holy ſpirit of God, or his *Amanuenſes*, the Prophets and Apoſtles ever intended. And I do not doubt but to make it plain to you,

that the Objection raiſed from this paſſage of St. *Paul*, is founded in the miſunderſtandings of men, and not in the Text it ſelf, or the true and genuine ſenſe of the Apoſtle in this place.

In order whereunto, I ſhall endeavour to lay before you the plain meaning of St. *Paul* in this Text, and that by the reſolution of theſe two Enquiries.

Qu. 1. What is here meant by eating and drinking unworthily?

Qu. 2. How and when men are ſaid to eat and drink their own Damnation?

Qu. 1. What is here meant by eating and drinking unworthily?

Anſ. For Anſwer whereunto, let me premiſe, That the Worthineſs here ſpoken of doth not conſiſt in perfection, or in an abſolute and unſinning obedience to all the Laws of God. For, if we were indeed thus perfect, we ſhould

ſhould have no need, or at leaſt not ſo much need of this Sacrament. Since the firſt *Adam* in the ſtate of Innocency, none, ſave only the ſecond *Adam* the Lord Chriſt Jeſus, could ever juſtly glory in being thus qualified. Notwithſtanding the vain pretenſions of ſome Enthuſiaſtical Catharists, this certainly is a thing which is not attainable in this life. For, *All have ſinned*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *Rom.* 3. 23. *cap.* 5. 12. *There is none that doth good no not one*, ſaith holy *David*, Pſ. 14. 3. *The juſt man falleth ſeven times*, ſaith the wiſe *Solomon*, Prov. 24. 16. *And if any man ſay, that he hath no ſin, he doth but deceive himſelf, and the truth is not in him*, ſaith the Apoſtle *John*, 1 *Joh.* 1. 8. From all which Scriptures, and many others which might be produced, wherein the terms are ſo general, that they cannot but

include all and every individual; it is plain and evident, that perfection doth not belong to the preſent ſtate of Mankind. And if ſo, then muſt we conclude, that the great and wiſe God, and the holy and bleſſed Jeſus, have inſtituted this Feaſt in vain, and given out a command to no purpoſe. A Table indeed may be ſpread, and richly furniſhed, but the rooms will be all empty; for if none but thoſe who are perfect be worthy, there will none be found that are ſo. This therefore cannot be the meaning of the Apoſtle in this place.

And as the worthineſs here ſpoken of doth not conſiſt in perfection; *i. e.* in an intire and unſinning obedience to the whole Law of God: So neither doth the unworthineſs here mentioned conſiſt in imperfection or ſin. It is not every failing, not every weakneſs,

neſs, nor every ſin, that preſently renders men unworthy to be Gueſts at God's Table. For if ſo, then all mankind would be excluded, becauſe all have ſinned, as appeareth from the Texts already quoted. And conſequently the Table of the Lord would be as empty, and this great Feaſt as much want Gueſts upon this account as upon the other. But this is ſo far from being the ſenſe of the Apoſtle here, that it is quite contrary to it. For, as Chriſt came into the World purpoſely to ſave Sinners, ſo did he inſtitute his holy Supper for the ſake of thoſe who were liable to ſin, and weak in the Faith; that thereby they might be fortified againſt the one, and ſtrengthened in the other. For any one to ſay then, I am a Sinner, and therefore Unworthy, is a falſe conſequence. For, it is not ſin barely, but an

obſtinate and impenitent continuance in ſin, that renders any one an unworthy Gueſt at God's Table, as I ſhall ſhow you hereafter.

From this account of this Text, you ſee plain, that there are ſome who have no pretence to perfection in this life, and yet in God's account are eſteemed worthy Communicants. And of ſuch an one I ſhall give you this ſhort Character, which may ſerve as a Teſt to try your own worthyneſs by.

To be a worthy Gueſt at God's Table, is, not to be without ſin, but to be ſenſible of ſin, and ſorrowful for it; one who doth hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs; one who doth earneſtly deſire Union and Communion with Chriſt, eſpecially in this holy Feaſt; One who is truly ſenſible of, and as truly thankful for, what the

the bleſſed Jeſus hath done and ſuffered for him; One who, upon that conſideration, doth reſolve with himſelf, that as much as in him lieth, he will for the future lead a new life, and live in all godly love and charity with all men.

This, though ſhort, I take to be a full Character of a worthy Gueſt at God's Table. Which worthy diſpoſition may very well conſiſt with many and great weakneſſes and imperfections.

This thus premiſed may enable us to give a more direct anſwer to our firſt enquiry, and help us to diſcover, What it is to eat and drink unworthily?

To eat and drink unworthily in the Apoſtle's ſenſe, doth therefore imply theſe things.

1. To come to the Lord's Supper with low and mean thoughts of it, being either ignorant what it

it is, or if in ſome meaſure knowing, yet are they willing to put a ſlight and contempt upon it; The former of theſe are indeed the more pityable, but neither the one nor the other are excuſable; both of them, in St. *Pauls* ſenſe, may be truly ſaid to eat and drink unworthily. The one contentedly ſitteth down under ſuch circumſtances that he cannot; and the other, if he can, will not make any difference between the Table of the Lord, and their own; between this great and holy Feaſt, and a common and ordinary meal and repaſt. This is that for which St. *Paul* reproveth the Church of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 11. *v.* 20, 21, 22. ſaying, *When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own Supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken.*

What,

What, have ye not Houſes to eat and drink in? Or deſpiſe ye the Church of God, and ſhame them that have not? What ſhall I ſay to you? Shall I praiſe you in this? I praiſe you not. This is to come to the Lord's Table without Faith or Fear; neither believing nor remembring what the bleſſed Jeſus hath done and ſuffered for them, of which at this Feaſt they ought to make a grateful and ſolemn Commemoration. 1 *Cor.* 11. 24. This is to approach thereunto without that due regard and reverence that becometh them, and befitteth the action they are about; not once conſidering with whom, or upon what they are to feaſt. And this is part, if not all, that St. *Paul* deſigneth in thoſe words which he addeth in the cloſe of this Text, *not diſcerning the Lord's Body.*

2. To

2. To eat and drink unworthily, is, to come to the Lord's Supper without a due ſenſe of ſin, without a juſt remorſe, a godly ſorrow, and an unfeigned repentance for it. For, as I before hinted to you, it is not ſin barely, but an obſtinate and impenitent continuance in ſin that maketh men unwelcome gueſts at God's Table. *If the wicked will turn from all his ſins that he hath committed, and keep all my ſtatutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die. All his tranſgreſſions that he hath committed, they ſhall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteouſneſs that he hath done, he ſhall live,* ſaith the Lord, *Ezek.* 18. *v.* 21, 22. *A broken and contrite heart, God will never deſpiſe,* Pſ. 51. 17. I might, if it were needful, produce many other Texts to this purpoſe, for the holy Scripture is full of ſuch

paſſages

paſſages as ſpeak the goodneſs and mercy of God to repenting and returning Sinners, how ready he is to receive them, how he openeth his arms to embrace them, and how kindly he bids them wellcome. If the Prodigal can but think of returning to his Father, his Father will prevent him, and run to meet him, *Luk.* 15. 18, 19, 20. *Turn unto me, and I will turn unto you, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*, Zech. 1. 3.

But though God be thus kind and gracious to the Penitent, yet will he be ſevere and inexorable to the obſtinate and impenitent. If men will ſin with an high hand, and go on therein without once reflecting upon what they do or have done; If they will ſtill perſevere in wickedneſs againſt all the admonitions of God, and checks of their own Conſciences; If they be reſolved to indulge

their

their luſtful appetites, and inordinate affections, and not to be reclaimed therefrom; If againſt the judgment of the Church, and the plain evidence of Scripture and reaſon, they will reject the Truth, and eſpouſe and defend Errours and Hereſies; If they give themſelves over to ſtrife and contention, to promote malice and hatred, to diſturb their own and the peace of that Church and ſtate in which they live. *What can ſuch men expect, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation to devour them? Hebr.* 10. *v.* 26, 27. There is nothing doth more ſurely forfeit the kindneſs and mercy of God, nor any thing that doth more certainly *treaſure up to it ſelf, wrath againſt the day of wrath*, than an hard and impenitent heart, *Rom.* 2. 5. As impenitency is a certain bar to Man's Salvation, ſo is it

to

to his participation of this holy Feaſt. For, to come to the Lord's Supper without a due ſenſe of ſin and ſorrow for it, is to go about to join *righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs*, to mix *light with darkneſs*, and to lodge *Chriſt with Belial*, 2 *Cor.* 6. *v.* 14, 15.

3. To eat and drink unworthily, is, to come to the Lord's Supper without Charity. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee; leave there thine offering before the Altar, and go thy way; firſt be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift*, Matth. 5. v. 23, 24. This counſel proceedeth from the unerring wiſdom of the bleſſed Jeſus, wherein he doth plainly intimate how vain it is to expect, that God will accept an offering at our hands, whilſt our hearts are filled with malice and hatred to our Brethren.

Brethren. Love to God and love to the Brethren, are qualifications indiſpenſibly neceſſary in every one, who will be a worthy Gueſt at God's Table; and neither of theſe can well conſiſt without the other. *If a man ſay, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for, he that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God, whom he hath not ſeen? And this Commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother alſo*, 1 John 4. v. 20, 21. Now who they are that come without Charity, will beſt appear, if we conſider that noble Character which St. *Paul* giveth of it, and compare their manner of addreſs therewith. Are men impatient under ſufferings? Are they apt to murmur and repine at the diſpenſations of Divine Providence, touching the ordering and governance of perſons and things

things in this World? Are they moroſe and unſociable? Are they over-tenacious, unfriendly, and unliberal? This betrayeth their want of Charity. For, *Charity ſuffereth long, and is kind.* Are men apt to be envious at the happy eſtate of their Brethren? Do they look with an evil Eye upon the proſperity of others? Do they macerate and waſt themſelves with vexing at the wellfare of other men? This ſpeaketh them ſtrangers to this excellent grace; for, *Charity envyeth not*, 1 Cor. 13.4. Are men proud and haughty? Do they love to be the Trumpeters of their own praiſe, and the proclaimers of their own worth? Are they apt to ſwell and be puffed up with the conceit of their own excellency? Do they entertain ſo high an opinion of themſelves, and their own virtue and goodneſs, that they look with

ſcorn

ſcorn and contempt upon all others? Are they unwilling to be indebted even to God himſelf, or to his mercy and bleſſing, or to any thing elſe, but only themſelves, for their ſucceſs in all things? This bewrayeth their want of love and Charity. For, *Charity vaunteth not it ſelf, is not puffed up.* Are men cenſorious and contumelious? Are they Railers, Revilers, Detracters and Backbiters of others? Do they love to betray the ſecrets, diſcloſe the faults, and expoſe the perſons of others to contempt and ſcorn? Can they pleaſe themſelves, with being unhandſome, rude, and unmannerly? This ſhoweth how empty they are of Love and Charity; For, *Charity doth not behave it ſelf unſeemly*, v. 5. Are men wholly devoted to themſelves? Are they altogether led and acted by the dictates of their own intereſt?

eſt? Can they lay aſide all care and concern for the good of that Community in which they live? Can they be content that all publick good ſhould truckle and give place to their private profit and advantage? Are they ſo much in love with themſelves, that they love nothing beſides, or in compariſon with themſelves? This plainly ſhows, that they have no true Love and Charity in them, For, *Charity ſeeketh not her own.* Are men paſſionate and ſuſpicious? Are their paſſions quickly raiſed, but when up, ſo ungovernable that they are not eaſily laid again? Are they apt to take fire at every ſpark, and be offended even with innocence it ſelf, if it happen to run counter to their humours and inclinations? Are they ſo jealous and ſuſpicious, that every buſh is taken for a Bugbear? that nothing, though never

never ſo good, can occur, in which they do not ſuſpect ſome hidden evil, or ſecret miſchief deſign'd againſt them; This is directly contrary to the rules of true Charity, For, *Charity is not eaſily provoked, thinketh no evil.*

Are men *carnal, ſold under ſin? Rom.* 7. 14. Do they love to walk in the vanity of their minds? Are their underſtandings ſo darkened, that they are become Aliens from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them? Are they paſt feeling, and have given themſelves *over unto laſciviouſneſs, to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs?* Eph. 4. v. 17, 18, 19. *Do they love to ſpeak lies through hypocriſie, having their Conſciences ſeared with an hot iron?* 1 Tim. 4. 2. *Do they rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardneſs of the wicked?* Prov. 2. 14. Are they ſo bent upon wickedneſs, that they cannot

not ſleep except they have done evil, *and their ſleep departeth from them, unleſs they have cauſed ſome to fall?* Prov. 4. 16. This is a temper far different from that of true Charity; For, *Charity rejoyceth not in iniquity, but rejoyceth in the truth*, v. 6. Are men impatient of injuries, and cannot bear the leaſt affront? Are they diffident and diſtruſtful of all things propounded to them, either by God or Man? Have they no proſpect of a future ſtate, nor can hope for any thing but what is before their Eyes, and within the reach of their ſenſes in this life? This plainly demonſtrateth that they are ſtrangers to this excellent grace of Charity; For, *Charity beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things*, v. 7.

Thus have I ſhown you who they are that come to the Lord's Supper

Supper without Charity; and by this and the two preceding rules, you may plainly perceive what St. *Paul* meaneth, when he ſpeaks of eating and drinking unworthily. Now if either you, or any other be really thus unworthy, it will nearly concern both you and them to conſider what you do. It will not be ſafe for you to approach this holy Table with ſuch unworthineſs about you. But I hope better things of you, and that upon this account you will have no juſt cauſe to abſent your ſelf from this holy Feaſt.

Pariſhioner. I heartily thank you, Sir, for the pains you have taken to rectify my miſunderſtanding, and inform me better. I bleſs God I have no ſuch low and mean thoughts of this Heavenly Banquet; and though I confeſs I am a Sinner, yet am I heartily ſorry for my ſins; though

I am not ſo charitable as I ought, yet am I not ſuch a ſtranger to it, as you have now deſcribed. And therefore, if other obſtacles be removed, I do believe I ſhall not hereafter abſent my ſelf upon this account. I am ſorry that I have interrupted you, but I could not forbear to teſtify my ſatisfaction in what you have ſaid; And now Sir, I beſeech you proceed to explain the other part of this Text, by reſolving that other enquiry, *viz.*

Qu. 2. How and when men are ſaid to eat and drink their own Damnation?

Paſtor. I ſhall endeavour with all readineſs, and as much plainneſs, to make good my promiſe, and gratify your deſire, in the reſolution of this enquiry alſo. And in order thereunto let me premiſe this in the general, *viz.*

That the puniſhment of un-

worthy Communicants differeth, according to the different degrees of their unworthineſs.

1. Some there are who come to theſe holy myſteries without any Faith, or any repentance, or any Charity at all. So Infidels or Unbelievers, Reprobates, Hypocrites and inveterate Sinners come. Now thoſe who thus preſume to approach this holy table, they in the ſtricteſt ſenſe may be truly ſaid to be *guilty of the body and blood of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 11. 27. *i.e.* They are as much guilty of his Death, as thoſe who Crucified him in the fleſh. Theſe have no more value for the blood of Chriſt than thoſe had; and therefore may expect to be as ſeverely puniſhed as they were or ſhall be. The Death of Chriſt will be unto them a ſavour of Death unto Death, not of Life unto Life. The Apoſtle's Argument is of great weight

weight in this caſe. *He that deſpiſed Moſes his law, died without mercy under two or three witneſſes. Of how much ſorer puniſhment then, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he be worthy, who treadeth under foot the ſon of God, and counteth the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy thing, and doth deſpite to the ſpirit of grace*, Hebr. 10. v. 28,29. Theſe are all compriſed under that one general expreſſion, *He that believeth not*, and of ſuch an one our Saviour ſaith, *He ſhall be damned*, κατακριθήσεται, *Mark* 16. 16. Thoſe therefore, who being thus unworthy, do preſume to come to the Lord's Table, they prophane this holy Feaſt, they trample under foot the blood of the Covenant, they are guilty of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, and may in the ſtricteſt ſence, be ſaid to eat and drink their own damnation. But I do not take this to

be the meaning of the Apoſtle in this place.

2. Some come to the Lord's Supper, who, though they have ſome ſmall glimmerings, ſome little knowledge, yet do they not ſo well diſcern the Lord's Body as they ought; who, though they have Faith, yet is their Faith ſo weak and languid, ſo low and faint, that it doth not ſo powerfully work by love and repentance as it ought; who do not ſo well diſcern the myſtical Bread in this Sacrament from common food, and therefore with too much rudeneſs, and too little reverence approach thereunto. Now ſuch is the goodneſs and mercy of God, that he is always willing to pity the weakneſſes and infirmities of his people. If there be but ſome beginnings of grace, ſome weak efforts, and faint deſires to do their duties, he is ſo far

far from diſcouraging, that he is willing rather to encourage them therein, that in time they may do better; *He will not break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flax*, Matth. 12. 20. *If there be but a willing mind, it will be accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 Cor. 8. 12. But if men be not ſo careful as they ought, to rectify their miſtakes in time, and amend their doings; then God is pleaſed ſometimes by Diſcipline and correction to inform them better, to ſhow them the folly of their doings, and reduce them into the right way. And this, I conceive to be all that is imported in that Word, which our Tranſlators have rendered, Damnation, in this place.

To make this good, I ſhall conſider both the ſignification of the word here uſed, and the de-

ſign of the Apoſtle in uſing of it.

There are two words made uſe of by St. *Paul* in this Chapter. The former of which (κρίμα) is properly rendred *Judgment*, and the latter (κατάκριμα) *Damnation* or *Condemnation*. Now it is the former of theſe words that is uſed in this Text, which is not ſo well rendered as it might have been. For, it doth not import the Judgment of Eternal Damnation, (as ſome would underſtand it) but only a Temporal puniſhment, which God is pleaſed ſometimes to inflict upon Believers, to correct what is amiſs in them, and ſtir them up the better to prepare themſelves for the performance of their duties. That ſuch kind of puniſhments were more frequent in the primitive times of Chriſtianity, is ſufficiently evident from the Writers of thoſe times. And that this is St. *Pauls*

ſenſe

ſenſe here, is plain from the following words: *For this cauſe many are weak and ſick among you, and many ſleep*, v. 30. But more plainly from the 32 Verſe, where St. *Paul* himſelf diſtinguiſheth the two ſorts of Judgments, ſaying, When we are *judged* (κρινόμενοι), we are chaſtened of the Lord; becauſe we ſhould not be *condemned* (κατακριθῶμεν) with the World. Whence it is very plain and evident, that the word, which is here rendered *Damnation*, imports no more but a judgment of Correction or Diſcipline for our good. And even that alſo may be prevented if we will take the right courſe. In order whereunto, St. *Paul* preſcribeth us a moſt excellent rule. For, ſaith he, *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged*, v. 31. Now what he meaneth by judging our ſelves, is

plain from the 28 *Verſe*, where he ſaith, *Let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of this bread, and drink of this Cup.*

I have now conſidered and explained this Text of Scripture, which, I fear, hath heretofore been made uſe of by ſome to very ill purpoſes; and ſet up as a *Mormo* to affright many well-meaning people from their duties. By vertue of this Text, ill underſtood, and worſe applyed; the Peace of the Church hath been diſturbed, the Bond of Union broken, and thoſe who ſhould have lived together in love and amity, like Fellow Citizens, and Members of the ſame Family, have been crumbled into Parties and Factions. Chriſtians have hereby been divided, not only in their judgments but affections, ſmall differences at firſt have been improved into Schiſms and Separations;

tions; and thoſe have produced ſuch heats and animoſities, that the unity of the Spirit, which ſhould have been kept in the Bond of Peace, hath thereby been diſſolved; and the Seamleſs-Coat of Chriſt Jeſus hath been rent aſunder. I cannot believe that Zeal and Ignorance had the only hand in this buſineſs, but that there muſt be a great deal of malice joined with them; Thoſe who pretended to be your Guides could not but know better, and therefore muſt on ſet purpoſe impoſe upon themſelves and you, that underhand they might the better carry on their deſigns upon Religion and the Church of God; In which they have been but too proſperous: Inſtead of the ſubſtance, the ſhadow of Religion was only left us; inſtead of Order and Diſcipline, nothing but diſorder and confuſion was to

be ſeen among us; Every one ſetting up for himſelf, and drawing Parties and Factions after him. And from whence came all this, but from our breach of Union and Communion with that Church, of which God had made us Members?

But when you have ſeriouſly conſidered what I have now ſaid, I hope you will find the Maſque taken off, and that this Text hath no ſuch frightful viſage as ſome have put upon it, and in which they have formerly repreſented it to you; that it is ſo far from diſcouraging any in their communicating with the Church in this holy Ordinance, that it is rather a great enforcement of their Duty.

And now having thus cleared the way, by explaining this Text of Scripture to you; for the more eaſy removal, or prevention of that

that Objection which is uſually raiſed therefrom, let me ask you, or rather let me deſire you to ask your ſelf a few Queſtions.

1. When God calls, Whether it be fit for you, or me, or any of us, to ſay we are not ready? When he commandeth to *Do this*, whether it will ſuffice us to ſay, We cannot do it as we ought, and therefore we will not do it at all? Let me put you a plain Caſe, and pray conſider of it; You are the Maſter of a Family, and you command one of your Servants to do this: he Anſwereth, he cannot do it to pleaſe you, and therefore he will not go about to do it at all. You command another to do the ſame thing, and he anſwereth, he cannot do it ſo well as he ſhould, but in obedience to your command he will do it as well as he can, and he hopeth you will be pleaſed with his endeavours.

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Which of these two would you account the better, and more acceptable Servant? I do not doubt but that you would prefer the latter. Well, this is your very Case, God Commands you to *Do this*, though you cannot do it so well as you should, yet do it as well as you can; by so doing you obey the Command of God, who knows your infirmities, and instead of punishing will pity them. Though God expect all that we can do for him, yet he expects no more than we can do. *For, if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not*, 2. Cor. 8. 12.

2. Whether it be not a thing certain, that you and I and all men must once die? and if so, Whether we shall not then be called to an account for the doing or not doing of this duty? *There*

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is an appointed time for all men once to die, and after that the Judgment, Hebr. 9. 27. At which time, *all men muſt receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad,* 2 Cor. 5. 10.

3. Whether any of us know the time, when we muſt die? if not, it may be this moment as well as the next, and if we be not fit to receive the Sacrament, we are not fit to die; and if we be taken in the act of diſobedience to a known command, what can we expect, but a fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery indignation to devour us?

4. What is the reaſon that we are not fitted and prepared for this holy Sacrament? Is the fault in God or Chriſt? No, they kindly invite, and command us too, to do our duties, and this duty in particular. Is it in the

Sacrament.

Sacrament it ſelf? No, that is ready prepared for us. Is it in the Miniſters who are employed about theſe holy things? No, they in the name of God and Chriſt, do earneſtly invite and intreat us, and are ready to deliver the ſame unto us. If therefore we are unfit and unprepared, the fault muſt be in our ſelves, and what is this, but to double our guilt, by doubling our ſin? *i.e.* by diſobeying the Command of God, and perſevering in ſo doing, to contract a greater guilt.

When you have asked your ſelf theſe Queſtions, and ſeriouſly conſidered what anſwer is to be given unto them; then be adviſed ſeriouſly to ponder, Whether this Plea of unfitneſs and unpreparedneſs will ſtand you in any ſtead at the Day of Judgment?

When that great Day of the Lord ſhall come, (as none of us knows

knows how ſoon it may come) when the Books ſhall be opened, and the Conſciences of all men diſplayed, when every thing ſhall be open and bare before the great Judge of Heaven and Earth, then will you wiſh, when it is too late, that you had been more careful and conſcientious in the diſcharge of your duties, and more complying with God and Chriſt in the obſervation of their Commands. Then will you wiſh that you had your Lives to live over again, that you had once more thoſe opportunities offered, which you have ſo often ſlighted and neglected. Then will you wiſh that you were but once more invited, and once more admitted to feaſt with God and Chriſt. How would you then improve the opportunity! You would certainly ſo beſtir your ſelves, that every moment ſhould be

be a ſtep toward Heaven and Happineſs.

Conſider this therefore whilſt you have yet time, neglect not your preſent opportunities. Remember, Opportunity is bald behind, it is not eaſily retrieved after it is once paſſed by us. Let it therefore be your care, whilſt it is called to day, ſo to improve every occaſion offered, that when God ſhall call, you may be ready to go, and take poſſeſſion of that Eternal Inheritance prepared for you in Heaven.

Pariſhioner. Sir, I have with great ſatisfaction attended to your Diſcourſe, and have great reaſon to thank you for the pains you have taken to rectify my judgment in this particular. I do plainly find, I have been too much impoſed upon, and for want of conſidering ſo well as I ought, have blindly ſwallowed that which

which I ought not. But being better inſtructed, I hope for the future I ſhall be more careful, and make it my buſineſs to be always ready to do my duty, when God ſhall pleaſe to give me an opportunity.

Paſtor. I ſhall think my ſelf very happy, Neighbour *Pariſhioner*, if, either this Diſcourſe, or any other weak endeavour of mine, ſhall, by God's bleſſing thereupon, prove inſtrumental to reduce you, or any of my People, to your duties, and to direct you in the right way to Heaven and Happineſs. To do all the good I can in this ſtation, wherein God hath placed me, I know and acknowledge to be my duty; and in the performance thereof, I bleſs God, I am willing to ſpend and be ſpent, to lay out all my ſtrength, and all thoſe abilities which he hath been pleaſed to endow

endow me with. I am never better pleaſed, than when thus employed, either in reſolving the doubts, or otherwiſe inſtructing thoſe committed to my care and charge. And therefore, if you have any thing more to offer, let us not loſe the opportunity; propound it freely, and I will endeavour with as much clearneſs as poſſible to reſolve you.

Obj. 4. *Pariſhioner.* Sir, I have heard ſome ſcruple the poſture in which we are required to receive the Sacrament, *viz.* Kneeling, fearing leſt there ſhould be either Superſtition or Idolatry, or both in it. And I muſt confeſs it hath very much ſtartled me, nor am I yet thoroughly ſatisfied about it.

Paſtor. Our Church in her Appendix to the Rubrick, after the Communion-Service, hath very well obviated this objection, for,

ſhe

ſhe there declareth two things.

1. That no adoration is hereby intended; nor ought to be done, either to the Sacramental Bread and Wine there Bodily received; or to any corporal preſence of Chriſt's natural fleſh and blood. For, 1. She declareth, that the Sacramental Bread and Wine do remain ſtill in their very natural ſubſtances, and therefore ought not to be adored; for, that were Idolatry to be abhorred by all faithful Chriſtians. 2. That the natural Body and Blood of our Saviour Chriſt, are in Heaven and not here; It being againſt the truth of Chriſt's natural Body to be at one time in more places than one.

2. That this poſture is only meant, 1. To ſignify thereby our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Chriſt, therein given to all worthy Receivers.

ceivers. 2. To prevent ſuch profanation and diſorder in the holy Communion, as might otherwiſe enſue.

Now after ſuch a plain Declaration as this, one would think, there ſhould be no room left for ſuch fears and jealouſies.

Pariſhioner. Indeed, Sir, I am of your opinion, and had I known, that the Church had taken ſo much care to ſatisfy her Members in this Caſe, I ſhould not have been ſo eaſily ſtartled as I was. But I ſee, I have been more than one way impoſed upon; every thing that may ſerve to affright hath been ſet before us; but whatſoever might ſerve to ſatisfy, hath been carefully concealed from us.

Paſtor. The Art of *Legerdemain* is one of the great Maſter-pieces whereby thoſe of the Separation have carried on their deſigns. Without this they could never have

have made ſuch rents and diviſions in the Church of God, and crumbled it into ſo many Parties and Factions. This we have known long, and I am glad you now ſee it.

Pariſhioner. Sir, I bleſs God for this happy occaſion, and I humbly thank you for the pains you have taken to undeceive me in many things. And though I am already in a manner ſatisfied as to the folly and vanity of this ſcruple; yet becauſe it makes a great noiſe among the Diſſenting Party, and is believed to have ſome weight in it; and becauſe I would willingly be able to give ſome reaſonable account of what I do; I will beg the favour of you to furniſh me with an Anſwer to their Objection. Which runneth thus.

Kneeling (ſay they) is not the poſture in which our Saviour gave the

the Sacrament to his Diſciples, and therefore it ought not to be impoſed upon us.

Paſtor. I commend your care and prudence in that you are ſo deſirous to be able to give an account of what you do. And the better to enable you, I ſhall now conſider their Objection.

I willingly grant, that this is not the poſture in which the Diſciples received this holy Sacrament from the hands of our bleſſed Saviour. But then we may conſider,

1. That as the poſture is not the ſame, ſo neither is the time nor place; for, he gave it after Supper, we adminiſter it before Dinner; He gave it in an upper Chamber in a private Houſe, we adminiſter it publickly in the Church; and yet there is no fault found with us for either of theſe.

2. That

2. That there is no word of Command in the whole inſtitution of this Sacrament, for the obſervation either of the ſame poſture, or the ſame time, or the ſame place. And therefore being things indifferent in their own nature, they are left to the wiſe and prudent determination of our Governours.

3. That as Kneeling is not the ſame poſture, ſo neither is ſitting nor ſtanding, which are the poſtures our Objecters uſually contend for; eſpecially ſitting, as being a Table-poſture. For, that of the Diſciples, was a poſture of diſcumbency, lying or leaning upon Beds, with their heads in one anothers Boſomes; which then was, and ſtill is the Table-poſture of thoſe Eaſtern People; and which neither is, nor ever was in uſe, nor indeed is practicable among us.

But

But to furniſh you with a more full anſwer to this Objection, take theſe conſiderations along with you.

1. That time, place and poſture, are neceſſary circumſtances of every action. I cannot do any thing, but I muſt have ſome time and place to do it in, and be in ſome poſture of body when I do it.

2. That though theſe circumſtances be neceſſary in the general, yet whether this or that in particular, is a thing indifferent in it ſelf. If there be no obligation upon me to this or that, I am at liberty to uſe any one which I ſhall think moſt convenient.

3. That the determination of this indifferency is left to the diſcretion of thoſe, who are either to do, or direct the doing of the action. If it be a thing of choice, ſo that I may either do, or not do

it,

it, then I am at liberty to do it in this or that manner, which I pleaſe. But if it be a thing preſcribed, ſo that I am neceſſitated to do it, then am I to obſerve the directions of him or them, who have power to preſcribe the action, as to the manner of doing it.

4. That in ſacred actions the moſt humble poſture is moſt ſutable for Creatures to their Creator. If I be to pay my devotions and adorations unto God, that poſture which is moſt ſignificant of my humility, and doth beſt expreſs the ſenſe which I have of God's greatneſs in himſelf, and his goodneſs towards me, will certainly be the moſt ſutable and becoming.

5. That to determine which is ſo, is not left to every private perſon. For, if it were, then ſhould we have as many opinions

as perſons, and as many poſtures as opinions; and all thoſe obtruded upon us as the moſt fitting; which, how great a diſorder and confuſion it would occaſion in the ſervice of God, you may, without conſulting an Oracle, eaſily divine.

6. That to prevent this confuſion and diſorder, God hath left us to the direction of our Superiours in theſe Caſes. And therefore is it, that we are commanded to *obey them that are ſet over us, and ſubmit our ſelves*, Hebr. 13. 17.

7. That ſince there muſt be ſome poſture in which this holy Sacrament is to be received, and that thoſe whom God hath ſet over us, have determined this, we ought without murmuring to ſubmit our ſelves, and acquieſce in their determination.

8. That if we deny them obedience

dience in this and ſuch like caſes, we leave them nothing to do in the ſervice and worſhip of God. For, if the thing commanded be juſt and good, lawful and right, antecedent to their command, then ought we to do it, whether they command it or not. And if the thing be evil and unlawful, then we ought not to do it, though they ſhould command it; for, in this caſe the rule holds good, *Whether it be better to obey God or man, judge ye?* Acts 4. 19. So that if we will not allow them to command and determine us in things indifferent, we muſt deny them any power and authority over us, and conſequently make this great Ordinance of God to be vain and fooliſh.

Theſe conſiderations duly weighed, and by your ſerious reflections upon them further improved, will, I hope, furniſh you

with a ſufficient anſwer to this Objection, and enable you to give a reaſonable account of what you do.

Pariſhioner. Sir, I am abundantly ſatisfied in what you have ſaid, I am now well provided to give a reaſonable account of what I do my ſelf; and do not doubt, but by God's bleſſing upon my endeavours to do ſome good upon others too. I have only one Objection more, which if I were as well ſatisfied in, as I am in all the other, I ſhould bid adieu to all ſcrupuloſity in this Caſe.

Obj. 5. It is not thought ſafe to Communicate in a mix'd Congregation, in an Aſſembly made up of good and bad, wicked as well as godly perſons; leſt by ſo doing we ſhould be partakers of other mens ſins.

Paſtor. I ſhall endeavour with as much plainneſs to give you ſatisfaction

tisfaction in this, as I have done in the other, and I hope ſhall not fail in it. In order whereunto, it will be neceſſary rightly to underſtand the true ſtate of this Caſe. There are two things which you ſeem to fear, *viz.* Communicating in a mix'd Congregation, and being thereby made partakers of other mens ſins. I ſhall conſider theſe ſeverally, and do not doubt but to make it evident, that this is a cauſeleſs fear; and that thoſe who have taught you thus to ſcruple, have indeed made you afraid, where really no fear was.

1. As to the firſt part of the Objection, which concerns Communicating in a mix'd Congregation, an Aſſembly made up of good and bad; the plain Engliſh of it is no more than this. You have no mind to receive the Sacrament in the Company of thoſe,

whom you think not to be ſo good and holy as your ſelves. To cure which tumour, I ſhall offer theſe Conſiderations.

1. Whether there be any Society in this World without ſuch a mixture? *i. e.* Whether there be any ſuch Aſſembly of men, in which there are not ſome good, and ſome bad?

2. Whether for any one to entertain ſuch high thoughts of himſelf, and ſuch low ones of others, do not ſavour too much of Phariſaical Pride and Inſolence? and whether that be not as great a ſin as any other?

3. Whether ſuch a temper of mind doth not beſpeak a man as unfit, if not more, than thoſe whom he judgeth to be ſo unworthy?

4. Whether it be not the duty of all, who addreſs themſelves to this holy Table, to lay aſide all proud

proud and over-weening thoughts of themſelves, all low and mean thoughts of others, and with lowly and humble minds to approach thereunto?

5. Whether this lowly and humble temper of mind doth not principally conſiſt in a deep ſenſe of our own ſin and unworthineſs; in a due apprehenſion of God's greatneſs in himſelf, and his goodneſs towards us, notwithſtanding our unworthineſs? And if ſo, Whether there can be any room left in ſuch an one for low and mean thoughts of others?

6. If thoſe, who thus object, will deal truly and juſtly by themſelves and others, I appeal to their own Conſciences, Whether they do, or can know ſo much unworthineſs in any other man, as they may and muſt know in themſelves? And if ſo, then have they no more cauſe to ſcru-

ple the Company of others, than others have to ſcruple theirs.

7. Whether the ſame reaſon will not hold in civil Converſation, as well as ſacred Communion? And if ſo, then muſt they not converſe with any one, who either is, or whom they think to be in a lower form of godlineſs than themſelves. They muſt retire and live alone, they muſt turn Hermits, and forſake the Converſation of the World, becauſe there is no Society of men to be found in it, in which there are not bad as well as good.

8. Whether it be not a piece of great impertinence (to ſay no worſe) for any one to concern himſelf with the worthineſs or unworthineſs of another? Eſpecially conſidering that plain and excellent rule, which St. *Paul* hath preſcribed in this Caſe, *Let a man examine himſelf* (not another),

ther) *and ſo let him eat of this bread, and drink of this Cup,* 1 Cor. 11. 28.

Theſe things well conſidered may ſuffice, I hope, to anſwer the firſt part of this objection, and remove that ſcruple of receiving the Sacrament in a mix'd Congregation. But

2. There is a greater danger yet, they are afraid leſt hereby they ſhould be made partakers of other mens ſins.

This (if there were any thing in it) would be a dangerous thing indeed. For, he that is a partaker of other mens ſins, ſhall certainly participate with them in the puniſhment due to thoſe ſins. But I do not queſtion but to demonſtrate to you, that even this alſo is a cauſeleſs fear. For, there are but theſe five ways (that I know of) whereby one man may be ſaid to partake of another

man's ſins. 1. By counſelling or contriving an evil action. Or, 2. By conſenting to the counſel and contrivance of others in an evil thing. Or, 3. By abetting and encouraging men in evil doing. Or, 4. By conniving at the wickedneſs of men, when it is in our power to prevent it. Or, 5. By joining and co-operating with them in their evil doing.

Thus and only thus may one man become a partaker with another in his ſins. And how far theſe rules are applicable to our Caſe, I appeal to your own Conſcience; But before you give your Verdict, let me adviſe you to take theſe conſiderations along with you.

1. That the action you are now required to join in, is ſo far from being evil, that it is good and very good; being a duty incumbent upon you and all Chriſtians

ſtians by vertue of a Divine Command.

2. That it is one thing to join with others in a known duty, and another thing to join with them in a known ſin. Theſe are caſes ſo different, that to think of confounding theſe together, were not only to put a force upon our own, but to offer an affront to the reaſon of all Mankind. We may as well attempt to bring the two Poles together, or to make Righteouſneſs and Unrighteouſneſs, Chriſt and *Belial*, Faith and Infidelity, or the moſt contrary extreams, and moſt palpable contradictions to agree in one, as to make theſe to conſpire together.

3. That in the performance of a common duty, every man is to be accountable for himſelf, no one for another. That Jewiſh Proverb is now out of Doors. *The Fathers have*

have eaten ſowre grapes, and the childrens teeth are ſet on edge, Ezek. 18. 2. For, *the ſoul that ſinneth ſhall die; the Son ſhall not bear the iniquity of the Father, neither ſhall the Father bear the iniquity of the Son; the righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him, and the wickedneſs of the wicked ſhall be upon himſelf*, v. 20.

4. That a good man doing his duty well, will be never the worſe for the Company of one that doth it ill; nor will he that doth it ill be ever the better for the Company of him that doth it well. *Judas* was never the better for communicating with the Diſciples, nor they ever the worſe for communicating with him.

5. That unleſs a man do, by ſome one or other of the ways before mentioned, join with another in doing evil, there is no fear of his being partaker with him,

him, either in his ſin or puniſhment.

All which conſidered, may, I hope, be ſufficient to diſcharge your mind of this fear, and guard you againſt ſuch impreſſions for the future. By this time, I ſuppoſe, you are ſenſible how much you have been impoſed upon, and that without any juſt cauſe you have been withheld from the performance of a known and neceſſary duty. I pray God to forgive them who have thus miſled you, and direct you better for the time to come.

Pariſhioner. Sir, I am very ſenſible now how great an errour I have laboured under; I bleſs God, and thank you for it. I beg your Prayers, and ſhall not fail to join my own, that it may pleaſe God to pardon both me and them who have led me into it. I am ſo well ſatisfied, that I hope I ſhall not

hereafter.

hereafter omit any opportunity of doing what I am commanded. Sir, I have given you a very great trouble, though you are pleaſed not to think it ſo; You have taken a great deal of pains, and to good purpoſe, for I am very well ſatisfied, that all my ſcruples have been idle and ungrounded Cavils, and that I had no juſt cauſe to ſeparate my ſelf from the Communion of the Church, as I have hitherto done. But, Sir, may I preſume to give you a little more trouble; You have removed my ſcruples, and now I deſire to be admitted into Communion with the Church, and am reſolved (by the bleſſing of God) to walk orderly and peaceably therein. If therefore you will pleaſe to furniſh me with ſome ſhort rules, which may direct me in my preparation for this holy Ordinance, and inſtruct me how to behave

my

my ſelf both then and afterwards; you will greatly oblige me, and I ſhall make it my buſineſs to obſerve them.

Paſtor. I ſhall very readily and willingly comply with your deſire, and think it no trouble at all. I am ſo far from thinking it ſo, that I look upon it as my duty, and am mighty well pleaſed when I meet with an opportunity of doing it: ſo well, that I could heartily wiſh, that thoſe whom God hath committed to my charge, would often give me this occaſion. And to ſatisfy you that theſe are my real thoughts, I ſhall now apply my ſelf to anſwer your deſire, by giving you the beſt rules and directions that I can in this Caſe. And to render them the more effectual, I ſhall obſerve the method propounded by your ſelf, and endeavour to ſhow you,

1. What

1. What is required of thoſe who come to the Lord's Supper?

2. How they ought to demean and behave themſelves when there?

3. What will be expected from them afterwards?

1. What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper?

Anſ. Our Church hath given a ſhort but very full Anſwer to this Queſtion, which is this, They are required to examine themſelves, whether they truly repent them of their former ſins, ſtedfaſtly purpoſing to lead a new Life, have a lively Faith in God's mercy through Chriſt, with a thankful remembrance of his Death, and be in Charity with all men.] Which Anſwer is founded upon that.

Ch. Catech.

that excellent Rule laid down by St. *Paul* in this Caſe. *Let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of this bread, and drink of this Cup*, 1 Cor. 11. 28.

To examine ones ſelf, imports a ſerious, diligent and impartial Tryal, in order to amendment and reformation. A tranſitory glance upon the ſeveral Occurrences of our lives, or a general ſurvey of what we do or have done, will not ſerve the turn; but we muſt make a particular ſearch and ſcrutiny into our ſeveral actions, and the ſeveral circumſtances, wherewith they have been attended; We muſt conſider from what principle, and by what rule we have acted, and to what end our actions have tended; and apply theſe to thoſe ſeveral and reſpective duties we have been about. For, without the due conſideration of theſe things, an action,

on, though materially good, may be formally evil.

This is to examine, but whom are we to examine? Not others but our ſelves; Let a man examine himſelf. God Almighty having endued man with reaſon and conſideration, having made him ſenſible of his duty, and apprehenſive of thoſe hopes and fears, that advantage and danger, which uſually attend the performance or non-performance thereof; leaveth him to be his own Judge, and remits him to his own Examination. So that if men will flatter and deceive themſelves in that which is their greateſt concern, they may blame themſelves, and none but themſelves, if danger enſue thereupon. God would not have men either impertinently to meddle in the concerns of others, or careleſly to truſt others with what concerns themſelves; he would have

have every one do his own duty, and take care of his own concern. It may reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that every man either is, or at leaſt ought to be beſt known to himſelf; and that he will be moſt juſt to himſelf. And therefore God truſts man with himſelf, and St. *Paul* in this very caſe refers man to himſelf, ſaying, *Let a man examine himſelf.* But if after all this, Men will be unfaithful to themſelves, and deceive their own Souls, whom have they to blame but themſelves?

Thus have I ſhown you both the importance of the word, and the Subjects of the Duty; what it is to Examine, and who they be, that are to undergo that Diſcipline. There only remaineth to conſider the end for which we are to examine our ſelves, and that is, In order to amendment and reformation. God would not have us

to

to ravel into our by-paſt lives, on purpoſe to take pleaſure in our former ſins; or from our impunity, to take encouragement to go on ſtill in the like iniquities; but he would have us to underſtand wherein we have formerly tranſgreſſed our rule, and done amiſs; to correct and amend it for the preſent, and to reſolve upon a more renewed courſe of living for the future.

This in the general is, or ought to be the deſign of ſelf-examination; but to be more particular, and bring it nearer to our preſent Caſe, I ſhall endeavour to do theſe five things.

1. To ſhow you the reaſonableneſs of this advice, *Let a man*, &c.

2. The neceſſity of the thing we are adviſed to, *viz.* Self-examination, in order to a due participation of this holy Feaſt.

3. What

3. What we are to examine our ſelves about.

4. By what rules we are to proceed in examining our ſelves.

5. For what end we ought to examine our ſelves.

1. The reaſonableneſs of this advice, *Let a man examine himſelf.*

St. *Pauls* advice and counſel in this caſe will appear to be very reaſonable, if we conſider either the excellency of the Feaſt we are invited to, or the unworthineſs of the perſons who are invited.

It is no common and uſual entertainment, but a great and extraordinary Feaſt that we are invited to; Nor is it only a bare Feaſt, but a ſolemn Feaſt upon a Sacrifice; and that Sacrifice no other, than the offering up of the Son of God and our Saviour. *Chriſt our Paſſeover is ſacrificed for us, therefore*

therefore let us keep the Feaſt, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 5. 7.

The Maſter of this Feaſt, or he who makes this great entertainment for us, is none other ſave only the holy Jeſus. It was he, who as a Prieſt offered himſelf as a Sacrifice unto God the Father; who hath inſtituted this holy Feaſt in memorial of his Death and Paſſion; and therein prepared for us not only common food for the refreſhment and ſuſtentation of our decaying Bodies; but ſuch as may ſuffice to nouriſh both our Bodies and Souls unto Eternal Life; not only the food of Angels, but that which far ſurpaſſeth thoſe Quails, and that Manna, wherewith the Iſraelites were ſo miraculouſly fed for forty Years together in the Wilderneſs. The dainties which are now prepared, are not only Bread and Wine, but the Body and Blood of

of Chriſt Jeſus, the tendency whereof is not only to preſerve life here, but to fit and prepare us for Eternal Life hereafter. So that if we conſider either the Excellency of this Feaſt, the dignity of its Author, the greatneſs of his preparations, the goodneſs of the things prepared, the greatneſs of its ends, or thoſe glorious advantages which may thence accrew unto us; have we not great reaſon to proceed cautiouſly herein? to take the advice which St. *Paul* giveth us, and examine our ſelves, before we preſume to eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup.

But if we conſider the unworthineſs of the perſons who are invited to this great Feaſt, it will render the advice yet more reaſonable. Who are they for whom the holy Jeſus prepares ſo great a Feaſt, and whom he invites to ſo noble an Entertainment? Men they

they are, but fallen men; Men in an eſtate of ſin, in a depraved and degenerate condition; who, by their original pravity, have loſt their primitive purity; and thereby unfitted themſelves for Communion with ſo holy a God. Whoſe Parents have been attainted of High-Treaſon againſt Heaven, and have involved their Children in the ſame guilt. Who have not only been ſold under ſin, but are become willing ſlaves thereunto; who are not only guilty by derivation, but more criminal by their own actual tranſgreſſions; who are not only by nature the Children of wrath, but by their own perſonal crimes liable to eternal ruine; who have not only ſinned, but repeated their ſins againſt Heaven; and by their iterated provocations have challenged the utmoſt of divine fury and indignation. Who have been

forward

forward enough to make Vows and Promiſes of better Obedience unto God, and as ready upon all occaſions to break thoſe Vows, and violate thoſe Engagements. Who have been always willing to cloſe with opportunities of ſinning, but very unwilling to be reclaimed therefrom. Theſe are they who are invited to this holy Feaſt, but be not miſtaken, for, whilſt ſuch, they have no encouragement to come thereunto. And therefore St. *Paul* giveth us good counſel, when he ſaith, *Let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of this bread, and drink of this Cup.* Which Examination, as I have already told you, muſt be in order to amendment and reformation. So that if we ſeriouſly conſider, either our original pravity, or our actual iniquities, our repeated ſins againſt God, our manifold breaches of Vows and Promiſes made

unto him, or our great unwillingneſs to be reclaimed from our ſinful courſes; we muſt needs own our ſelves to be very unworthy Gueſts at God's Table; and if ſo, then we ſhall find great reaſon to be very cautious in our approaches thereunto, and to think this advice very reaſonable, To examine our ſelves before we eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup.

2. The neceſſity of the thing we are adviſed unto, *viz.* Self-Examination in order to a due participation of this holy Feaſt.

The neceſſity of Self-Examination in order to this end, will appear to be very urgent, if not indiſpenſible, when we conſider, That without a ſerious, diligent, and impartial tryal of our ſelves, we can never fully underſtand wherein we have done amiſs. And ſo long as we are prepoſſeſſed

ſed with an opinion of being innocent, we ſhall never endeavour to amend; and if we do not that, we can never expect to be welcome Gueſts at Gods Table; and if we be not fit Gueſts there, we cannot expect the advantages thereof. But if, notwithſtanding our unpreparedneſs, we will preſume to come thereunto, then may we look to meet with that dreadful Sentence pronounced againſt him who wanted the Wedding Garment, which was, *To be bound hand and foot, and to be caſt into outer darkneſs, where is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, Matth. 22. 13. All which conſidered, may fully evince the neceſſity of Self-Examination.

But though the advice which St. *Paul* giveth us, be in it ſelf ſo reaſonable, and the thing he adviſeth us to be ſo neceſſary; yet will not the want thereof, excuſe

our diſobedience to the command of Chriſt, or our non-attendance upon him at this holy Feaſt. It will rather condemn us, becauſe we refuſe to gratify him in a buſineſs, which is not only reaſonable in it ſelf, but neceſſary for us. To make an Apology for our not communicating upon this ſcore, were to excuſe one fault, by committing another. For, there can no other reaſon be aſſigned of our not doing our duty, but only our negligence and unwillingneſs. Let not any therefore hence forward dare to ſay, they are not ready when Chriſt calls them; but rather let them before hand conſider what it is that is required of them, and ſo prepare themſelves that they may be always ready. Let them make it their buſineſs to underſtand their duty and do it, to ſearch every corner of their hearts, and every circumſtance of

their

their lives, and amend what is amiſs; that ſo they may be always ready. And to aſſiſt you herein, I ſhall now apply my ſelf to the next thing which I promiſed to ſhow you, *viz.*

3. What we are to examine our ſelves about?

There are two things which we ought eſpecially to examine our ſelves about; *viz.* Our bypaſt lives and converſations, and our preſent thoughts and reſolutions. As to the former of theſe, Let us conſider under what obligations we ſtand unto Almighty God to live holily and righteouſly, how far he hath obliged us by his mercies and goodneſs, by his Promiſes and by his Providence, by Mercies conducing both unto Life and Godlineſs here, and to Eternal Life, and never-failing Happineſs hereafter. How far we are engaged by our own Vows

and Promiſes, not only made, but frequently repeated in the preſence of God and of his People, and by our conſtant and continued profeſſion of Chriſtianity. Let us conſider what rules he hath given us to live by, how equitable they are in themſelves, how practicable as to us, and how eaſy and pleaſant he hath thereby rendered our way to Heaven and Happineſs. Let us call to mind how far we have violated thoſe obligations, and how often we have tranſgreſſed thoſe rules; and ſeriouſly examine what progreſs we have made towards repentance and amendment. Thoſe who are ſo conſiderative, as to make theſe reflections upon the time paſt, will find cauſe ſufficient to be troubled for what they have done, and to reform their way of Living; by which only means, they

they may in ſome meaſure capacitate themſelves for this holy Feaſt.

But it is not only our by-paſt Lives and Converſations, but our preſent thoughts and reſolutions, we are to examine our ſelves about. We ought to conſider what thoughts we have of the ways of God, and the ways of ſin; towards which the byaſs of our affections doth moſt incline; Whether we can, not only be content, but with chearfulneſs abandon the ways of ſin and wickedneſs, and with eagerneſs purſue the principles of holineſs and true righteouſneſs: Whether we be convinced in our Judgments of the unreaſonableneſs and folly of the one, and of the great reaſonableneſs and equity of the other; and whether theſe ſentiments, (if any ſuch be found in us) be as yet formed into reſolutions of better

obedience for the future. Theſe are the things which we are to examine our ſelves about, and that we may the better do it, Let us in the next place conſider,

4. By what rules we are to proceed in this Self-Examination?

The rules by which we are to examine our ſelves are theſe two, *viz.* The word of God, and our own Conſciences.

The one will ſhew us our duty, and the other will either accuſe or excuſe us as to the performance of it. Let us therefore carefully ſtudy the Book of God, and make it our buſineſs to be acquainted with his Will made known unto us therein. Let us keep a good correſpondence with our own Conſciences, neither ſtifling the genuine dictates thereof, nor ſuffering them to be groundleſly clamorous upon us; Let them

them not ſtrain at a Gnat, whilſt they ſwallow a Camel; let them not ſtart and boggle at things indifferent, whilſt they greedily embrace things unlawful. A good underſtanding of the former will help to inform the latter; and theſe two thus qualified will be the beſt rules to examine our ſelves by. Let us therefore make uſe of theſe rules, and for our further direction, let us in the laſt place conſider,

5. For what end we ought to examine our ſelves?

The end of our Examination, as I have already hinted to you in the beginning of this Diſcourſe, ought to be amendment and reformation. In order whereunto ſeveral things will be requiſite, as

1. A ſerious Meditation of God's goodneſs and our own unworthineſs. The former of theſe will ſhow us under what obliga-

tions we are, and the latter may ſerve to humble us under the ſenſe of our miſcarriages; and both theſe together may contribute much to our amendment and Reformation. The kindneſs and love of God our Saviour toward us being duly conſidered, cannot chuſe but conſtrain us to live more holily and righteouſly; and the conſideration of our own unworthy and diſingenious dealing muſt needs make us aſhamed of what we have done, and willing to do better. Let us therefore often think of theſe things, and endeavour to awaken thoſe ſentiments of duty and gratitude, honour and honeſty, intereſt and advantage, to perſwade us to a good improvement of this Meditation.

2. Repentance for ſins paſt, Reformation of life at preſent, and a firm reſolution of better obedi-

ence

ence for the future. In vain ſhall we examine our ſelves, if after we have found what is amiſs in us, we do not repent of it; and to little purpoſe will that repentance be, if we do not reform and amend it; and as little worth will that reformation be at preſent, if we do not reſolve, and perform our reſolutions too, by living more holily and righteouſly for the time to come. For this end therefore ought we to examine our ſelves.

3. Prayer to God will alſo be highly neceſſary in this Caſe. No Chriſtian Duty can be ſucceſsfully carried on without God's bleſſing, and the divine aſſiſtance; and God doth not ordinarily vouchſafe that to any but thoſe who faithfully and fervently pray for it. If therefore we expect any good Iſſue of our Self-Examination, we muſt thereunto add

Prayer.

Prayer. When we have thereby diſcovered our ſins, we muſt pray unto God for the mortification and forgiveneſs of them. When we addreſs our ſelves to God's Table, we muſt pray unto him to compoſe and ſettle our thoughts, and to bleſs and direct us in what we go about. And that our Prayers may be the more effectual, we muſt add our hearty endeavours for the accompliſhing of what we pray for. Without thus doing we cannot hope for any good effect of our Examination.

4. Watchfulneſs will be very neceſſary. We muſt watch over our ſelves, over our thoughts, over our words, and over our actions, that nothing therein be diſpleaſing unto God. We muſt watch againſt our Enemies, the World, the Fleſh and the Devil, that they do not withdraw us from

from our duty, and perſwade us unto folly. Without this, our Examination will be to little purpoſe, and our reformation and amendment will go but ſlowly on.

5. Fear and reverence, or an awful regard of that Deity, with whom, and upon whom we are invited to feaſt, will alſo be very neceſſary. For, if the Examination of our ſelves, and the conſideration of what we go about, do not produce in us reverential apprehenſions of the divine preſence; if it do not make us more careful in what manner we make our approaches thereinto; and how we behave our ſelves whilſt there; if it do not create in us a fear to diſpleaſe, or offend him, with whom we are to feaſt; if it do not make us very cautious of provoking that Deity, whom we pretend to worſhip and adore in this holy action: It is an evident ſign,

ſign, that our pretended Examination hath no tendency towards amendment and reformation.

6. Thankfulneſs for ſo great a mercy as is now offered us, will alſo be highly neceſſary. Can we conſider what God our Saviour hath done and ſuffered for us, and what advantages he doth daily offer to us, without being deeply ſenſible, and truly thankful? If we can, it will be a ſad ſymptom of the deplorableneſs of our preſent eſtate and condition, and give but little hopes of our amendment and reformation.

7. Faith and confidence in God through Jeſus Chriſt, that our endeavours herein will be ſucceſsful. This alſo will be highly neceſſary. For, doubting deſtroys all the comfort, which we might reaſonably hope for, from the performance of our duties; and takes off the chearfulneſs with which we

we ought to proſecute our endeavours. Let us therefore lay aſide this, and draw near unto God with full aſſurance of Faith. Let us believe that he not only is, but that he is a Rewarder of all thoſe that faithfully ſeek him. Having duly performed thoſe duties that are required on our parts, let us not doubt, but believe, that he will accept of our ſo doing, and bleſs us therein.

Thus have I endeavoured to make good the firſt part of my Promiſe, by ſhewing you, what is required of all thoſe who come to the Lord's Supper, *viz.* Self-Examination; as alſo by ſhewing you the reaſonableneſs and neceſſity of our ſo doing; what we are to examine our ſelves about, by what rules we are to proceed, and for what end we ought to examine our ſelves. And whoſoever he be that doth ſeriouſly ſet himſelf

ſelf to the performance of this duty, and in ſo doing doth carefully obſerve theſe rules, may with confidence approach, and reaſonably hope to be a wellcome Gueſt at God's Table.

Pariſhioner. Sir, You have very well acquitted your ſelf in this firſt part of your Promiſe; I am mightily pleaſed, and wonderfully well ſatisfied with thoſe directions which you have given me, and am reſolved, by God's bleſſing, with care and Conſcience to obſerve them. I know, I cannot do it ſo well as I ſhould, but I will do it as well as I can; and I hope God will accept my willing mind, and pardon my weakneſſes and infirmities.

But, Sir, You did alſo promiſe to direct me how to demean and behave my ſelf when I am at this holy Feaſt, ſo that I may not diſpleaſe and offend my bleſſed Saviour,

our, who hath been, and ſtill is ſo kind to me.

Paſtor. It is very true, I did promiſe you that alſo, and I hope, I ſhall not fail you therein, becauſe I intend to take two unerring Guides along with me, *viz.* The bleſſed Jeſus, and his holy Apoſtle St. *Paul*; The former of which, not only commandeth us to do this, but to do it in remembrance of him, *Luk.* 22. 19. and the latter tells us, that in the doing of it, there ought to be a *Diſcerning of the Lord's Body*, 1 Cor. 11. 29.

1. When we come to this holy Feaſt, we ought to call to mind all that the bleſſed Jeſus hath done and ſuffered for us. He who commandeth us to *do this*, commandeth alſo to do it *in remembrance of him.*

This holy Feaſt was never intended by the bleſſed Author and Inſtituter

Inſtituter of it, to be an Expiatory or propitiatory Sacrifice; nor as the Papiſts call it, an unbloody offering for the ſins both of the quick and dead; nor for a ſcenical and hiſtrionical repreſentation of the Death of Chriſt. But it was deſigned to be an Euchariſtical Sacrifice, or a Sacramental action, whereby Chriſtians are to commemorate that bloody Sacrifice, which Jeſus Chriſt offered upon the Croſs for the ſins of Mankind. And therefore St. *Paul*, reciting the words of Inſtitution, applyeth them to this holy action, ſaying, *This do ye in remembrance of me*, 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. And that he might be the better underſtood, he explaineth himſelf in the following words, ſaying, *As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this Cup, ye ſhew forth, (*or *ſhew ye forth) the Lord's death, till he come*, v. 26.

Now

Now the word καταγγέλλειν which is here uſed, and rendered to ſhew forth, doth not ſignify to expreſs one thing by the likeneſs of another, nor to repreſent it by hiſtrionical geſtures, but to preach and declare the thing as it is, *i. e.* by celebrating this holy Feaſt, to keep up the memorial thereof, and thereby declare, what a deep ſenſe we have of all that our bleſſed Saviour hath done and ſuffered for us.

Whence by the way, I may note unto you the vanity of that Popiſh Figment of *Tranſubſtantiation*. For, if the bleſſed Jeſus had deſigned to have been always really and bodily preſent with his people in this holy Feaſt; this command of his would have been very inſignificant; for, Remembrance doth not reſpect things future, or things preſent, but things paſt.

But

But to return to our buſineſs, To do this in remembrance of him, and in ſo doing, To ſhew forth the Lord's Death, ſeem to be expreſſions exegetical or explanatory of one another. And therefore it may not be amiſs to enquire into the ſenſe and meaning of both, that we may the better underſtand how to behave our ſelves at this holy Feaſt. To that purpoſe I ſhall take them in order, and ſhow you,

1. **What it is, To do this in remembrance of him?**

2. **What it is, To ſhew forth the Lord's Death?**

1. What it is, To do this in remembrance of him?

Anſ. An idle and unconcerned remembrance of the ſufferings and death of Chriſt; ſuch as men ſometimes have, when they call to mind things paſt which are of no

no great concern to them, is not the thing here intended: No, it muſt be an effectual remembrance; *i. e.* Such an one as may ſtir up our minds to apprehend and apply Chriſt with all his benefits to our ſelves; ſo to remember the Sacrifice and Death of Chriſt, that we may thence reap Comfort, Joy, Peace of Conſcience, increaſe of Faith and Charity, and an aſſured hope of future life and felicity on that account: So to remember the love that he hath ſhown unto us therein, as to be always thankful to him for it. But to be more particular,

1. When we come to God's Table, and there ſee the two Elements of Bread and Wine, ready prepared to be delivered to, and received by us; we ought to call to mind that Jeſus Chriſt is a perfect Saviour, and that his Body and Blood, which are repreſented

ted thereby, are the true Bread and Water of Life to all that believe in him, and worthily receive that holy Sacrament.

2. When we ſee the Bread and Wine ſet a-part by the Miniſter, and by him Conſecrated to that holy purpoſe, by repeating the Promiſes and Prayers made for that end; we ought to remember that Jeſus Chriſt was alſo ordained of God, appointed and ſet a-part by him to be our Mediator and Redeemer: to make interceſſion for us at the Throne of Grace, and redeem us from all our ſins.

3. When we ſee the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out, it ſhould put us in mind how the Body of Chriſt was broken, and his Blood ſhed for us, how he was Crucified and ſlain, and all this for our ſins: and that if he had not thus once died for us, we

muſt

muſt have died ever, *i.e.* we muſt have undergone an ever, yet never dying Death.

4. The Sacramental actions of giving and receiving the Elements, ſhould put us in mind, That God doth truly and really give Chriſt, with all his merits, and all the efficacy of them, to every worthy Receiver in this Sacrament.

5. The conſideration of theſe two laſt Meditations ſhould put us upon renewing our Faith and Repentance. For,

1. When we remember that his Body was broken and his Blood ſhed for us, it ſhould ſtir up in us a godly ſorrow, and unfeigned repentance for our ſins, which have been the cauſes of ſo great ſufferings to our bleſſed Saviour. 2. When the Miniſter giveth the Bread and Wine, and we receive them; we ſhould at the

the ſame time lift up our hearts to Heaven in a deep ſenſe of God's goodneſs, and our own unworthineſs, and endeavour to apprehend and apply Chriſt with all his benefits to our ſelves; believing that he was made man for us, and that he ſuffered and died, not for the remiſſion of ſins in general, but of our ſins in particular.

6. The conſideration of the dying Love of the bleſſed Jeſus, repreſented to us in this holy Sacrament, ought to put us in mind how neceſſary a charitable frame and temper of mind is this Feaſt. If Chriſt have ſo loved us, then certainly we ought to love him; and if we would do this well, let let us take his own directions, who ſaith, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*, John 14.15. And *if God ſo loved us, we ought alſo to love one another*, 1 John 4. 11.

Love

Love to the Brethren is not only our duty, but our greateſt intereſt, For, *thereby know we that we have paſſed from death to life, becauſe we love the brethren*, 1 John 3. 14. The remembrance therefore of the dying love of the bleſſed Jeſus, ought to ſtir up in us at this time, a love to God, and to the Brethren.

7. The conſideration of the whole ſhould create in us an humble and thankful frame and temper of mind. It ſhould put us upon offering the Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving unto God, not only in word, but in every action of our life, for Chriſt and all his benefits; and to teſtify the reality of that gratitude, by renewed acts of Faith, Repentance and Obedience all our days. Thus ought we to receive this Sacrament in remembrance of Chriſt.

2. What it is to ſhew forth

the Lord's Death till he come?

Anſ. An Hiſtorical Narrative of the Sufferings and Death of Jeſus Chriſt; to be able to tell that he died at *Jeruſalem*, in the Eighteenth Year of *Tiberius* the Emperour; *Pontius Pilate* being the Roman Deputy in *Judea*, and *Joſephus Caiphas* the High Prieſt that ſame year; This is not to ſhew forth the Lord's Death in the Apoſtles ſenſe. But ſuch a ſerious Meditation thereof as may inhanſe our hatred of ſin, our love to God, and our thankfulneſs to Jeſus Chriſt; if it be conſtant and continued, will beſt declare our ſenſe of our Saviour's Sufferings, and ſhew forth his Death till he come.

1. When therefore we are at God's Table, and there ſee all things prepared for us; when we conſider, that Chriſt our Paſsover was ſacrificed for us, and that we

are

are now invited to a Feaſt upon that Sacrifice: We cannot but reflect upon the juſt anger and indignation of God againſt ſin. We cannot but obſerve, that ſuch was the ſeverity of Divine Juſtice, and the heinouſneſs of ſin, that no reconciliation could be made between God and Sinners, till the puniſhment due to ſin was ſuffered. So highly was God incenſed, ſo great was his wrath juſtly conceived againſt ſin; that he was not to be pacified by any thing, but only the deprecation, and Death of his own Son. Theſe ought to be our thoughts, eſpecially at this time; and if thus we employ our ſelves when we are at this holy Feaſt, and in purſuance of theſe thoughts do for the time to come loath and abhor, hate and avoid all manner of ſin; then and thereby ſhall we truly ſhew forth the Lords Death till he come.

2. When we are at God's Table, and there ſee the dainties provided for us; that there is not only food for our bodies, but for our Souls alſo; not only ſuch as may ſuſtain our frail Bodies, or ſupport and maintain the union between our Souls and Bodies here; but ſuch as will nouriſh us up in grace here, and fit us for Glory hereafter. When we conſider, that ſuch was the love of God to Mankind, *that he gave his only begotten ſon, that whoſoever believed on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life,* John 3. 16. have we not the greateſt Specimen of God's mercy and goodneſs towards us, that we can deſire? and is not this love writ in Characters ſo legible in this holy Sacrament, that he that runneth may read them? and if ſo, what cauſe have we with grateful acknowledgments to own and declare

clare the goodneſs and mercy of God, to praiſe and thank him for it, to love him again, and to teſtify that our love, by keeping his Commandments. Which if we do, and perſevere in ſo doing, then ſhall we truly declare and ſhew forth the Lord's Death till he come.

3. When we are at God's Table, and there, under thoſe ſymbolical Elements of Bread and Wine, can clearly diſcover the Body and Blood of Chriſt really, though not corporally offered to us; how lively is the dying love of our bleſſed Saviour therein repreſented to us? May we not therein plainly read thoſe dreadful pangs, thoſe dying groans, and thoſe unſpeakable ſufferings, which the bleſſed Jeſus did willingly undergo for our ſakes? and ought we not with all poſſible expreſſions of love and grati-

tude to commemorate this his kindneſs? This is all (*i. e.* this with the dependencies thereupon) that he requireth of us, for all that he hath done and ſuffered for us, *viz.* to celebrate this Feaſt in remembrance of him, which if we rightly do, and continue ſo doing, then do we truly declare, or ſhew forth the Lord's Death till he come. For, this Meditation cannot fail of filling our hearts with grateful ſentiments of our Saviours Love; and thoſe ſentiments will certainly imploy our tongues in thankful acknowledgments, and engage our whole lives in dutiful returns unto him for it.

Thus have I ſhown you in the firſt place how you ought to demean and behave your ſelf, when you are at God's Table, *viz.* you ought to do this in remembrance of Jeſus Chriſt. But there is one thing more yet required of you, *viz.* 2. In

2. In the doing of this, there ought to be a Diſcerning of the Lord's Body.

This expreſſion hath been mightily ſtrain'd by ſome, who have racked their inventions to find out ſuch notions of it, as, I am apt to believe, were never intended by St. *Paul*; but I ſhall not now either trouble my ſelf or you with the Examination of them. My deſign is only to inſtruct you plainly, and make things as intelligible to you as I can. In order whereunto, all that I ſhall do at preſent, ſhall be only to acquaint you with the full importance of the word *Diſcerning*, and by that means to ſhow you the true and genuine ſenſe of the Apoſtle in this expreſſion.

The word (Διακρίνων) here uſed and rendred *Diſcerning*, imports only a diſcretional act, whereby we do exempt ſome one

thing from the common order of others, and ſet a more honourable value and eſteem upon it. This ſenſe of the word is warranted by the uſage of it in other places. St. *Jude*, v. 22. adviſeth us to have compaſſion of ſome, *making a difference*, (διακρινόμενοι) *i. e.* between ſuch Sinners as are treatable, and willing to be inſtructed, and ſuch as are intractable, obſtinate and diſobedient. And St. *Paul* putteth the queſtion, ſaying, 1 Cor. 4. 7. *Who hath made thee to differ?* (τις διακρίνει;) *i. e.* who hath ſeparated thee from the reſt of Mankind, and placed thee in an higher Form than them? from both which places, the importance of the word is very plain, that it implies only a diſcretional act, whereby one thing is diſtinguiſhed from another, and more honour and reſpect paid thereunto, than to the other.

To

To diſcern the Lord's Body therefore (in St. *Pauls* ſenſe) is, to look upon the ſacred Elements of Bread and Wine in this holy Feaſt, as the moſt precious ſymbols of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, to put a difference between them, and all other common meats and drinks, to uſe them with a religious reverence, and not to approach this holy Table without a lively Faith in Chriſt Jeſus, a ſerious and unfeigned repentance of all our ſins, a ſtedfaſt purpoſe of leading a new life, and being in Charity with all men.

This I take to be St. *Pauls* meaning in this expreſſion, and if you thus diſcern the Lord's Body, you will certainly find the bleſſed effect of it, in the ſpiritual nouriſhment of your Soul unto Eternal Life.

And thus have I performed the

ſecond part of my Promiſe to you, by ſhowing you, how you ought to demean and behave your ſelf at God's Table.

Pariſhioner. Sir, You have infinitely obliged me by the pains you have taken to furniſh me with ſuch good rules and directions, I pray God to give me grace to obſerve and follow them. I ſhall (God willing) do my endeavour, and I beg your Prayers for my aſſiſtance. But there is one thing more yet, which you were pleaſed to promiſe me, *viz.* ſome Directions how to behave my ſelf after I have received this holy Sacrament. And theſe alſo I would willingly take along with me when I go from hence.

Paſtor. I confeſs I am your Debter by Promiſe as to this alſo, and ſhall endeavour to diſcharge my ſelf of that Debt, by giving you ſome ſhort and plain rules how

how to carry your ſelf afterwards.

1. When you go away from this holy Sacrament, you ought to carry along with you a deep ſenſe of thoſe great obligations which God Almighty hath laid upon you therein. You ought to retire not only into your Cloſet, or ſome private place, but into your ſelf; and there meditate of the great mercy and goodneſs of God the Father, in ſending his Son to be your Mediator and Redeemer; and of the great condeſcenſion, and infinite kindneſs of God the Son, in taking upon him your nature, and ſubmitting himſelf to Death, even the Death of the Croſs for your ſins. You ought often to think of that great honour you have received, in being admitted not only to feaſt with God and Chriſt, but to feaſt upon Chriſt, the true Chriſtian Sacrifice.

Sacrifice. In a word, you ought by ſerious thoughts and meditations of what you have been about, to imprint upon your minds a due ſenſe of God's goodneſs, and thereby take a proſpect of all that happineſs, which you either do enjoy, or may obtain, by complying with, and being obedient to the command of the bleſſed Jeſus in this particular.

2. Having thus imprinted theſe things upon your mind, you muſt endeavour thereby to work it into an humble and grateful frame. When you reflect upon your former ſins and preſent unworthineſs, you will find cauſe ſufficient to be humbled for them; and when you conſider God's greatneſs in himſelf, and his goodneſs towards you, you will find good reaſon to be thankful for the favours you have, and daily do receive from him. Let it be your

care

care therefore always to cheriſh due ſentiments of divine goodneſs in your mind, that ſo you may be ready upon all occaſions to praiſe and glorify his great and holy name for it. Can you remember how kindly you have been invited, how courteouſly received, how nobly and friendly entertained by the bleſſed Jeſus, and yet be unthankful? I cannot believe that any one who pretends to Chriſtianity, can ſo far forfeit his Religion and reaſon too, can be ſo much loſt to all the ſentiments of piety and humanity at once, as to be guilty of ſo groſs ingratitude. Unthankfulneſs in Divinity is an odious crime; and Ingratitude in Morality is no better. So much was *it* abhorred even by the Heathens, that it became a Proverb among them, Call a man ingrateful, and you have ſaid the worſt you can

of

of him. Be not you therefore guilty of that againſt God, which the Heathen looked upon as ſo great a reproach among themſelves; Conſider that heavy charge which God draws up againſt *Iſrael*; Iſa. 1. 2, 3. *Hear, O Heavens, and hearken, O Earth, ſaith the Lord, for, I have nouriſhed and brought up Children, but they have rebelled againſt me. The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his Maſter's Crib; but Iſrael doth not know me, my people doth not conſider.* Let the conſideration of God's ſo deep reſentment of this crime in his own people, teach you and me to beware of it. Let us recollect our ſelves, and call to mind all thoſe incomparable favours and benefits which God from time to time hath beſtowed upon us, and the advantages of this holy Feaſt in particular; that ſo our minds may be always ready

dy to make grateful acknowledgments thereof.

3. When by theſe or the like Meditations, you have wrought your mind into ſuch an humble and thankful frame; Your next work will be, to evidence the truth and reality of that temper, by actions ſutable thereunto. *We do not expect to find grapes on thorns, nor figs on thiſtles. For, as a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, ſo neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit*, ſaith our bleſſed Saviour, *Matth.* 7. 16, 17, 18. And thence he concludeth, *Therefore by their fruits ye ſhall know them*, v. 20. The beſt evidence therefore of a worthy Communicant, is to be taken from his way of living afterwards. If he make Conſcience of what he doth, if he make it his great care and buſineſs to live holily towards God, and righteouſly towards

towards all men, it is a good ſign of the goodneſs of his condition; But if, notwithſtanding the obligations which have been laid upon him at this holy Feaſt, he return with the Dog to his Vomit, and the Sow that was waſhed to his wallowing in the Mire; if he ſtill adhere to his old ſins, and take pleaſure in his former wickedneſs, it is an evidence that he ſtill remaineth in the gall of bitterneſs, and that without a timely repentance and reformation, his portion will be with Hypocrites in Everlaſting Burnings. It is good counſel which St. *Paul* giveth us, *Col.* 2. 6. *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.* Thereby intimating, that our returns ought to be ſutable to favours and benefits which we have received. The holy and righteous God loveth holineſs and

and righteouſneſs in his people, and expects it from them.

When by our Baptiſm we were at firſt admitted into Chriſtianity, we entered into Covenant with God; That we would renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the ſinful deſires of the fleſh; that we would believe all the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith: And that we would keep God's holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the ſame all the days of our life. Now our continued profeſſion of that Faith, into which we were baptized, is indeed a daily repetition of that Promiſe; but as often as we receive this holy Sacrament, and feaſt with God upon this holy Sacrifice, we ſolemnly renew our Covenant, and do thereby engage our ſelves to perform the Conditions thereof.

To

To ſum up all in a word therefore, If you would know what is expected from you, after you have been admitted a Gueſt at God's Table; It is briefly this, You muſt make it your great concern, with all care and Conſcience, to perform your Baptiſmal Vow and Covenant in all the parts and branches thereof; *i. e.* You muſt take care to ſpend the remainder of your lives in living holily towards God, and righteouſly towards all men.

And thus have I endeavoured to perform the third and laſt part of my Promiſe, by acquainting you, what it is that will be expected from you, after you have had the honour to be admitted a Gueſt at God's Table, and to bear your part in the Celebration of this holy Feaſt.

Pariſhioner. Sir, You have, to my great ſatisfaction, fully performed

formed all that you promiſed: And now, it is my part not only to remember, but carefully to obſerve, and conſcienciouſly follow thoſe good Rules and Inſtructions, which you have given me. And that, from this time forward, I will endeavour, by *God*'s Aſſiſtance, to do. I beg your Pardon for the trouble I have given you, and heartily thank you for the pains you have taken with me. I hope you will excuſe the One, and I will endeavour to improve the Other to thoſe good Ends and Purpoſes, which you deſign'd it. And that I may the ſooner ſet about that Work, I will at preſent take my Leave of you.

Paſtor. God b'w'y', good Neighbour; Go, and do as you have ſaid, and the *Lord* give a Bleſſing thereunto. Be not you wanting to your ſelf in your Endeavours, and *God Almighty* will never be

wanting to you in his aſſiſtance. But that you may carry on this work the more comfortably, be frequent in your Prayers to God for his bleſſing and direction; and reſt aſſured, my Prayers ſhall not be wanting at the Throne of Grace, that you may be ſucceſsful therein.

A SHORT FORM OF PRAYERS

Fitted for the more Worthy

RECEIVING OF THE Holy Communion:

WITH A

Morning and *Evening* Prayer for the Uſe of Private Families.

WHen you hear the Exhortation read by the Miniſter, on the *Sunday*, or *Holy-day* before, and find your ſelves thereby invited to, and admoniſhed to prepare your ſelves for, the Celebration of the Sacra-

ment of the Lord's Supper; conſider ſeriouſly, by whom, and to what you are invited; imprint upon your minds a due ſenſe of that great honour which is done you by God, and of the great love of your dying Saviour; and think with your ſelves with what Godly Preparation you ought to approach thereunto. And that theſe impreſſions may not wear out, let me adviſe you conſtantly to uſe this following, or ſome ſuch like Prayer and Confeſſion, every Morning and Evening the Week before.

O Almighty and moſt merciful Father, who of thine infinite goodneſs haſt been pleaſed to invite me not only to Feaſt with thee, but to Feaſt upon thee; who haſt provided for me not only Sacramental Bread and Wine, but the Bread and Water of Life, the Body

Body and Blood of my bleſſed Saviour. How infinite is thy mercy, and how unſpeakable is thy loving kindneſs herein! I am overwhelmed with the thoughts of it, and loſt in admiration. But when I conſider, That Thou art a God of purer Eyes than to behold the leaſt Iniquity; That Thou neither doſt nor canſt approve of any Sin in any one; then my fears ariſe, and my confidence faileth me. How ſhall I, who am a great and grievous Sinner, appear before thee? How ſhall I dare to approach thy preſence? I cannot but own that both in thought, word, and deed, I have grievouſly offended thy moſt Sacred Majeſty, and that too frequently, and with too high an hand. I have done what in me lay, to forfeit thy favour, and to provoke thy wrath and indignation againſt me. What there-

fore can I expect, but with him who wanted the Wedding-Garment, to be rejected with ſcorn, and expoſed to Puniſhment? But, O Lord, with Thee is mercy that thou mayſt be feared. It is thy property, to have mercy and to forgive. In confidence, therefore, of this thy great mercy, and in hopes of Pardon and Forgiveneſs, it is, that I am now humbly bold to appear before Thee. Behold me, O Lord, thus proſtrate in thy preſence, with the tears of true, and unfeigned Repentance, bewailing the miſcarriages of my by-paſt life; and for thy mercies ſake, and for the merits ſake of thy dear Son, Jeſus Chriſt, humbly begging, not only Pardoning Grace for Sins paſt, but Preventing Grace againſt Sin for the time to come. It was for my Sin that my Saviour ſuffered; it was to waſh away the ſtain there-

of

of that he ſhed his Blood, O let me not loſe the benefit of it! If there be any thing in me that may render me uncapable of it, be pleaſed to remove it. If there be any thing wanting in me, to make me fit for it, let thy Holy Spirit, O Lord, work it in me. Subdue and mortifie all my Luſts and Corruptions, and implant in me principles of Holineſs and true Righteouſneſs. Teach me to love and fear Thee as I ought. Give me an humble and obedient temper of mind. Let it be my great pleaſure to walk in thy ways, and my only delight to keep thy commandments. Make me thankful for all thy mercies, and careful to improve them to thy glory, my own comfort, and the good of others. Fit me for all ſtates and conditions of life, and prepare me for every good work; but eſpecially for the celebration

of that Sacred Feaſt which I am now invited to: Let nothing, O Lord, be wanting in me that Thou knoweſt requiſite for me, when I appear in thy preſence. Let me be found a welcome gueſt at thy Table; and there receive that heavenly Food, which alone can nouriſh up my Soul unto Eternal Life. All which I humbly beg, in the Name and Mediation of Jeſus Chriſt, and in that Sacred form of Words, which he himſelf hath taught us, ſaying,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

In

In the Morning of the Communion-Day, before you go to Church, uſe this following, or ſome ſuch like Prayer.

O Lord my God, the Day, the joyful Day is come, on which Thou haſt promiſed to provide, and invited me to be a gueſt, at a moſt Heavenly Banquet. This day I am to Feaſt with Thee, and Feed upon my bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer. Give me, I beſeech Thee, a due ſenſe of that Honour and Happineſs I am now going to be made partaker of, and make me truly thankful for it. I am now going to Thy Table, good Lord fit and prepare me for it; furniſh me with ſuch Graces, and Ornaments of Mind, as may be ſuitable to ſo high and honourable an entertainment; fill my Soul with

Fear and Reverence, with Humility and Meekneſs, with Piety and Devotion, and with Faith and Charity; that nothing may be found wanting in me, when I appear before Thee. Let thy Bleſſing go along with me, and let Thy Holy Spirit guide and direct me. Let me find a gracious reception there, and a full ſatisfaction to all my wiſhes and deſires: Enable me ſo to Eat the Fleſh and Drink the Blood of my bleſſed Saviour, that he may evermore dwell in me, and I in him. Grant this, O Lord, for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

When

When you Approach the Lord's *Table, and there ſee the Symbols of* Chriſt's *Body and Blood placed in order, and ready to be Conſecrated to that Holy Uſe; you may uſe this following, or ſome other ſhort Prayer, to this purpoſe.*

I Am here, O *Lord*, in Obedience to thy Command; and am very deſirous to do my Duty: I come to renew my Covenant with Thee; and beg thy aſſiſting Grace, That I may keep it better for the time to come. To this end, be pleaſed to increaſe and ſtrengthen that Faith, which Thou haſt already wrought in me; and grant, That I may ever hereafter ſerve and pleaſe Thee in Newneſs of Life. I find a Table ſpread for me, bleſſed be thy Name for it; give me, I beſeech

beſeech Thee, a Spiritual Appetite thereunto. I am unfit, I confeſs, for ſo great an Honour: I am unworthy to partake of theſe Holy Myſteries: I have no Merits of my own to truſt to; but I have thy Mercies to depend upon, and the Merits of my Bleſſed *Saviour* to plead for me. Hear them, O *Lord*; and, for their ſakes, look graciouſly down upon me: upon their Account, let me find Favour with Thee here, and obtain Everlaſting Life, when Time ſhall be no more, hereafter. *Amen.*

When you ſee the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out by the Miniſter; then uſe this following, or ſome other ſhort Prayer, to this purpoſe.

O Holy *Jeſu*, who for my ſake didſt ſuffer thy ſelf to be

be Apprehended, Arraigned and Condemned, and (at laſt) to ſuffer Death upon the Croſs for my Sins: Give me Grace to be truly affected with the Remembrance of what Thou haſt done, and ſuffered for me. Write it on the Tables of my Heart, that I may ever be mindful of it: and let the Conſideration thereof, cauſe me to hate Sin, and love Holineſs. *Create in me, O Lord, a new Heart, and renew a right Spirit within me*; that, for the future, I may make it my buſineſs to *Perfect Holineſs in thy Fear*: That, as Thou diedſt for Sin; ſo I may die to Sin: That, as thy Body was broken, and Blood ſpilt upon the Croſs for the Sins of Mankind; ſo my Heart may be broken under the Senſe of Sin, and broken off from the love and likeing of any Sin; and, at laſt, fixed upon Holy and ſtedfaſt Reſolutions

lutions of better Obedience for the future. *Amen.*

Whilſt the Miniſter is Receiving the Sacrament *himſelf, and Adminiſtring it to the reſt of the Communicants; you may uſe this following, or ſome other ſhort Prayer, to this effect.*

O Bleſſed Lord *God!* Who am I, that Thou ſhouldſt be thus mindful of me? That Thou ſhouldſt admit me a Gueſt to thy Table? I know, I am unworthy to appear in thy Preſence, and ſhould have wanted Confidence to approach this Sacred Place, if I had not received thy Command ſo to do. *Lord*, Let me not ſuffer for my Obedience thereunto: But, as Thou haſt thought fit to invite me hither; ſo be pleaſed to prepare my Heart for the Reception of theſe Holy Myſteries pro-

provided for me: And grant, That my ſo doing may in ſome meaſure be inſtrumental to the Advancement of thy Glory, the Good of my own Soul, and the Edification of others. And this I beg for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake. *Amen.*

When you have Received the Holy Sacrament, *whilſt the Miniſter is Adminiſtring it to others, or returning to the Table, and placing things decently, and in order there; you may uſe this following, or ſome other ſhort Prayer, to this purpoſe.*

O Almighty *God*, and Heavenly Father, I moſt heartily thank Thee for that Spiritual Food, which I have now Received. Let not, I beſeech Thee, any Failure of mine deprive me of the Advantages of this

this Holy Feaſt: But be pleaſed to add thy Bleſſing thereunto, that ſo it may be Food indeed, and nouriſh my Soul; not only in Grace here, but unto Glory hereafter. I am ſo ſenſible of the Obligation, that Thou haſt been pleaſed now to lay upon me, that I do henceforward devote and conſecrate my ſelf, Soul and Body, wholly to thy Service; humbly beſeeching Thee to accept this my bounden Duty, and to give me Grace ever hereafter rightly and truly to perform the ſame; to thy Honour and Glory, through *Jeſus Chriſt*, our Lord. *Amen.*

When

When you return Home, and are retired into your Chamber, or Cloſſet; you may uſe this following, or ſome other Prayer, to this purpoſe.

O Almighty and moſt Merciful Father; who art Good, and do'ſt Good: Thou art an inexhauſtible Fountain, and an unfathomable Depth of Mercy and Goodneſs! Of thy Fulneſs we all receive, and are filled, without leſſening thy Store. How great an inſtance have I this Day had of thy Bounty? How large an Experience of thy Mercy? I confeſs, I am a Sinner, and a great Sinner; the unworthieſt of thoſe that worſhip Thee, unfit for the Company of thy Saints and Servants: And yet I have this Day had the Honour to ſit at thy Table, and to be entertain'd by Thee

Thee at a moſt Heavenly Banquet. I have had the Happineſs, not only to Feaſt with my *Saviour*, but to feed upon Him; to eat his Fleſh, and drink his Blood: which whoſoever doth, He hath aſſured me, *Shall have Everlaſting Life*; and He will *Raiſe him up at the laſt Day. What ſhall I render unto Thee, O Lord, for all this Mercy and Goodneſs? I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of my God:* I will make it my buſineſs, to ſerve and pleaſe Thee, as long as I live. Theſe are my Reſolutions: *Lord*, Let not thy aſſiſting Grace be wanting to me, for the Performance of them! Write, I beſeech Thee, this thy Mercy upon my Mind, in ſuch Characters as may never be blotted out. Give me ſuch a due Senſe of it, that my Heart may be unfeignedly thankful; and that I may ſhew forth

forth thy Praiſe, not only with my Lips, but in my Life; by giving up my ſelf to thy Service, and by walking before Thee in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all my Days, through *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord: In whoſe Bleſſed Name and Words I further Pray as He hath taught me, ſaying,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

FOraſmuch as no Buſineſs, either Religious or Civil, can be well done by us, without the Grace and Aſſiſtance of *Almighty God*; nor any thing proſper under our Hands, without his Bleſſing thereupon: And that, neither his Grace and Aſſiſtance, nor his Bleſſing upon what we

we go about, can reaſonably be hoped for, unleſs, with Pious and Devout Hearts, we faithfully and diligently Pray unto Him for the ſame: It will highly concern us, even in point of Intereſt, as well as Duty, to take the Counſel of St. *Paul*, and *Pray continually*; *i. e.* To keep our Hearts and Minds in ſuch an Holy and Devout Frame and Temper, that at all Times, and upon all Occaſions, we may be ready to offer up pure Hearts, and clean Hands unto *God* in Prayer. But though this ought to be the *conſtant* Frame and Temper of our Souls; yet there are ſome particular Seaſons, when we ought ſeriouſly, ſolemnly, and on ſet purpoſe, to exerciſe the ſame; eſpecially, Morning and Evening. And becauſe all Maſters of Families ought, with the good *Joſhuah*, to take care, that not only *They themſelves*,

ſelves, but thoſe of their Houſe, ſerve the Lord; and that this can never be well done, without keeping up ſome Religious Order and Diſcipline in their Families; it will not only be convenient, but neceſſary for them, to ſet apart ſome certain Times and Seaſons, wherein both they and their Houſhold may jointly exerciſe this ſo immediate Act of Worſhip; and together, offer up their Prayers, and return their Thanks and Praiſes unto *God*. This Part of Religious Worſhip, I am afraid, is too much neglected, if not wholly laid aſide, in many Families, at this Day. To reſtore, therefore, this Holy Order and Diſcipline in private Families; to revive the Exerciſe thereof, and to aſſiſt thoſe who are not already better ſupply'd, in that Godly Practice, I have Compoſed this following Prayer; and do heartily wiſh, that

that all Maſters of Families would take care, that either this, or ſome ſuch like Prayers, be conſtantly, at leaſt every Morning and Evening, uſed in their Houſes.

The Prayer.

O Almighty, moſt Merciful, and Eternally Gracious *Lord God*! Thou art a *God* hearing Prayers; therefore, to Thee ſhall all Fleſh come: Thou art Good, and doeſt Good: Thou art the Great and Glorious Creatour of Heaven and Earth, the Wiſe Orderer and Diſpoſer of all things therein. We, the unworthieſt of thy Creatures here on Earth, are at this time proſtrate in thy Preſence; humbly confeſſing our Sins, and thankfully acknowledging thy Mercies. We confeſs, O *Lord*, we have ſinned againſt Heaven,

Heaven, and againſt Thee, and are no more worthy to be called thy People: We have left undone thoſe things, which we ought to have done; and we have done thoſe things, which we ought not to have done: We have omitted many Duties, and committed many Enormities: We have ſinned againſt great Light, and great Love, diſcovered to us in the Goſpel of thy Son. Our Sins, we confeſs, have been ſo out of meaſure ſinful, that, ſhould'ſt Thou deal with us as we have deſerved, or meaſure out unto us a Vial of Wrath proportionable to the *Ephah* of our Iniquities, it might in a drowning meaſure and manner fall upon us. But with Thee, O *Lord*, is Mercy, that Thou may'ſt be feared; and therefore is it, that we are once more humbly bold to offer our Perſons, and our Devotions, to the Throne of

of Grace; beſeeching Thee, for thy Mercy's ſake, and for the Merit's ſake of thy dear Son, and our Bleſſed *Saviour*, in Mercy to look upon us; to open our Eyes, and make us ſenſible of our Sins; to open our Hearts, and make us ſorrowful for our Sins; to work in us a Repentance, never to be repented of; to ſubdue and mortifie in us all our Luſts, and luſtful Inclinations; all our corrupt Thoughts and Imaginations: And, inſtead thereof, to implant in us Principles of Holineſs, and true Righteouſneſs. Give us a lively Faith in thy Son, a ſincere and entire Obedience to thy Will, a profound Humility and unwearied Patience under thy Hand, and an holy Contentedneſs with every Eſtate and Condition, wherein Thou ſhalt pleaſe to place us. Juſtifie, we pray Thee, our Perſons,

ſons, and ſanctifie our Natures: Waſh us throughout in Soul, and Body, and Spirit; that ſo, both our Perſons, and our Performances may now and evermore be acceptable in thy Preſence, O *Lord*, our Strength, and our Redeemer.

With us, we pray Thee, be mindful of all Thine: Bleſs thy Univerſal Church, and every Member thereof; particularly, theſe Churches of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*. And herein, in a particular manner, let the choiceſt of thy Bleſſings reſt upon the Head and Heart of thy Servant, but our dread Soveraign, *JAMES*, by thy Grace, and eſpecial Providence, of *England*, *Scotland*, *France*, and *Ireland*, King, Defender of the Faith, in all Cauſes, and over all Perſons, as well Sacred as Civil, in theſe his Realms, and in all other his Majeſty's Dominions and Countries, Supreme Moderator

tor and Governour. As Thou haſt done Great things for Him; ſo, we pray Thee, do Great things by Him: In Him give unto us the Bleſſings of Government; and in Him fulfil amongſt us the Ends of Government. Bleſs Him and Us in the Safety and Preſervation of his Royal Perſon, and in the Health and Happineſs of his Royal Relations. In particular, Bleſs Him and Us, in bleſſing his Royal Conſort, and our Gracious Queen, *MARY*; make her a joyful Mother of Children, and happy in them. And in Bleſſing, be pleaſed to bleſs *Katherine*, the Queen Dowager, their Royal Highneſſes, *Mary* Princeſs of *Orange*, the Princeſs *Anne* of *Denmark*, and all the Royal Family. Endue them with thy Holy Spirit, enrich them with thy Heavenly Grace; proſper them with all Happineſs, and bring them at laſt,

laſt, though late, to thine Everlaſting Kingdom. Bleſs Him and Us, in bleſſing the Miniſters of thy Holy Word and Sacraments; as well Arch-Biſhops and Biſhops, as other Paſtors and Curates. Bleſs the Lords, and the reſt of his Majeſty's moſt Honourable Privy-Council. Bleſs all the Nobility, Gentry, Judges, Magiſtrates, and Commonalty of the Realm: Bleſs them all, from the Higheſt to the Loweſt, with Religious Hearts towards Thee their *God*, Loyal Hearts towards their Soveraign, and Loving and Charitable Hearts one towards another. And now, O *Lord*, we pray Thee for a Bleſſing upon Us, even Us, who are here before Thee, at this time: Bleſs Us in our Perſons, in our Off-ſpring, in our Servants, in our Relations, in our Acquaintance, in our Habitations, and in all our Lawful Actions.

Thus far this Prayer *may be uſed both Morning and Evening; and the* Morning Prayer *may be continued thus:*

LET thy good Hand of Providence be over us this Day for Good: Let it preſerve and defend us from all Dangers both of Soul and Body. We are now going to Converſe with a ſubtil and ſinful World; be Thou pleaſed to fortify our Minds againſt both the Allurements and Contagion thereof. Let neither our own in-bred Luſts, and Corruptions betray us; nor the Power of *Sathan*, nor Policy of the World, prevail upon us to ſwerve from the ways of thy Commandments. Be pleaſed, O *Lord*, to go in and out with us in all our Undertakings, and to bleſs and proſper us therein. Imprint upon our Minds

Minds ſuch a warm and vigorous Senſe of thy Divine Providence over us, as may engage us always to walk in thy Ways, and oblige us to ſtudy nothing more, than how to ſerve and pleaſe Thee all our Days. Nor are we mindful of our ſelves alone, but of all thoſe alſo, who are in worſe Condition than our ſelves; who are any ways afflicted or diſtreſſed in Mind, Body or Eſtate, (eſpecially thoſe, who either deſire, or ſtand in need of our Prayers): Let it pleaſe Thee to comfort and relieve them according to their ſeveral Neceſſities; giving them Patience under their Sufferings, and an happy Iſſue out of all their Afflictions. And, as we Pray unto Thee; ſo, we deſire to Praiſe Thee, for all Mercies, at all Times, and upon all Occaſions afforded to us: We bleſs Thee for our Creation, Preſervation,

and all the Bleſſings of this Life: In an eſpecial manner, we adore thy Great and Good Providence for thy Protection of us this Night paſt, and for that competent Meaſure of Reſt and Sleep, which we have enjoyed. We bleſs Thee, for that Thou haſt ſafely brought us to the Beginning of this Day: Defend us in the ſame with thy mighty Power; and grant, That this Day we fall into no Sin, neither run into any kind of Danger: But that all our Doings may be ordered by thy Governance, to do always that is Righteous in thy Sight. We bleſs Thee for all thoſe thy Saints and Servants, who are departed this Life in thy Faith and Fear: Beſeeching Thee to give us Grace ſo to follow their good Examples, that we, with them, may at laſt obtain a Glorious Reſurrection in the Life Everlaſting. But above all, we adore

dore and magnify thy Great and Glorious Name, for the Redemption of the World by our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Fountain and Foundation of all our Mercies; for the Means of Grace here, and the Hope of Glory hereafter. For all theſe Mercies we Pray unto Thee, and for all theſe Bleſſings we deſire to Praiſe Thee, in that moſt Sacred Form of Words, which the Holy *Jeſus* hath taught us, ſaying,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

The Evening Prayer *may be continued thus*;

WE Praiſe and Glorify thy Great and Glorious Name, O *Lord God*, for thy moſt Gracious Providence over us, and Protection of us this Day paſt; that, by the Aſſiſtance of thy Grace, and Holy Spirit, Thou haſt withheld us from falling into many Sins, which our own Luſts and Corruptions might have betrayed us into; and prevented us from running into many Dangers, into which our own Folly and Vanity might have led us. Continue, we pray Thee, the ſame Providence over us this Night; and let it watch over us for Good. Lighten our Darkneſs, we beſeech Thee; and, by thy Great Mercy, defend us from all Perils and Dangers of this Night. Furniſh us with

with a competent meaſure of Reſt and Sleep; and let that Sleep be ſweet and pleaſant, ſtrengthening and refreſhing to our wearied Bodies. Let it be our Care to compoſe our Minds into a quiet and ſedate Temper, and to fill them with ſuch Holy Thoughts, and Heavenly Meditations, that there may be no room for our extravagant Fancies to work upon them, nor any place for evil or idle Dreams to diſturb them. And grant, we beſeech Thee, That by that Reſt and Refreſhment, which we ſhall this Night receive at thy Merciful Hands, we may be ſo enlivened and invigorated, that the Day enſuing we may be able (in the Strength thereof, and by the Aſſiſtance of thy Grace) not only to diſcharge the Duties of our Particular Callings in this World; but alſo, thoſe of our General Callings, in order to our Everlaſting

verlaſting Happineſs in the World to come. And this we beg, for the ſake of thy dear Son, and our Bleſſed Saviour, *Jeſus Chriſt*; in whoſe Bleſſed Name and Words we Conclude theſe our broken and imperfect Prayers, ſaying, as He himſelf hath taught us;

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

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FINIS.